P&SN Police and Security News
Serving Law Enforcement & Homeland Security
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2024
VOLUME 40 ISSUE 5

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NEWS

Study Connects Head Injuries and Mental Health Challenges among Law Enforcement Officers

A new study is the first to shed light on the high prevalence of head injuries and related mental health symptoms in a previously overlooked population when it comes to concussion surveillance: law enforcement officers.

The survey of Ohio law enforcement officers found that 74% reported a lifetime history of one or more head injuries and 30% had a head injury which happened on the job. Many more of these injuries went unreported than were treated by a health care professional. And, further analysis showed Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and depressive symptoms were higher in those who had experienced one or more head injuries.

"This is an area where we have to improve awareness, just like we did in the sport concussion world," said lead author Jaclyn Caccese, Ph.D., assistant professor in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.

"The goal is really to improve officer safety and health in the long term," said Caccese, also an investigator in Ohio State's Chronic Brain Injury Program. "And, I think there's a lot of potential there, especially when it comes to improving career longevity – that, although treating these injuries is difficult in the moment, it leads to a longer career, better health outcomes and better quality of life, not only in their service, but also in retirement. I think with that awareness, they will be more likely to report injuries as they sustain them."

The study was published recently (August 5, 2024) in the *Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation.*

The medical and law enforcement researchers who co-authored the study have published a separate paper advocating for implementation of a concussion return-to-duty protocol for law enforcement officers – similar to practices already in place in sports and the military.

The researchers surveyed 381 law enforcement personnel in central Ohio about their lifetime head injury history, years of service in the military and civilian law enforcement, and rank and section assignment (such as patrol, corrections or administration). The participants also completed questionnaires assessing symptoms of PTSD and depression.

Of those respondents, 282 reported one or more prior head injuries, mostly from sports, followed by such incidents as falling or being hit by something or someone, or a car accident. Over 50% of participants reported head injuries involving loss of consciousness or followed by feeling dazed or confused, or having a gap in memory – all signs of a Probable Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). A concussion is considered a mild TBI.

Nine percent of total respondents screened positive for PTSD symptoms and 36% reported mild or greater depressive symptoms. Participants with a prior head injury reported higher symptoms for both conditions. Researchers estimated that fewer than one in four head injuries was diagnosed or treated by a health care provider.

Caccese said researchers are still learning about the long-term effects of concussions, but current evidence suggests head injuries which go untreated may increase risk for depression, anxiety, PTSD, and problems with cognitive function and memory.

For law enforcement officers, concussions often occur in the heat of their job. The stress associated with the role and poor sleep from shift work are also common in this population. The circumstances can contribute to worse outcomes following a head injury.

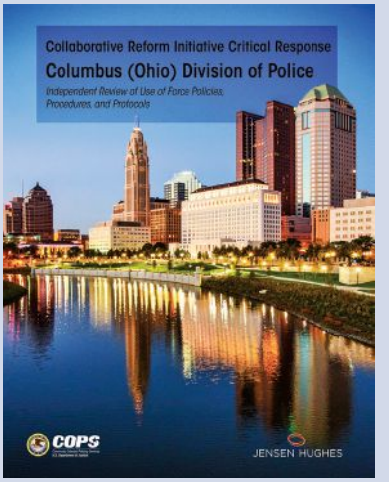
Study co-author Josh Walters, a deputy in the Franklin County, Ohio, Sheriff's Office, leads his office's peer support team of deputies certified to work with personnel experiencing a range of problems. Teaming up for the study of head injuries and their association with PTSD and depressive symptoms grew out of the peer group's long-term partnership with Ohio State researchers and clinicians to enhance deputy health with physical therapy, sleep studies and concussion-related training.

"Part of what we're doing with Ohio State is looking at, how can we extend the health of the deputy?" Walters said. "Being physically fit is an important part of our job because not only do my colleagues depend on me, but the community depends on me. And, if I can't physically keep up, then it could be a life-or-death situation for somebody."

The next step is working to adopt the return-to-duty protocol proposed by the team – removal from duty, a gradual increase in activity and screening by a medical provider before returning to full duty – and testing its effectiveness and adaptability to different organizations.

"Now we have some data that we can present to administrations, to unions, to leadership that says, 'Here's the problem. This is how we can fix it. Let's start working that process,'" Walters said.

A copy of the study, "A Framework for Concussion Management Strategies in Law Enforcement Officers," can be downloaded at **https://tinyurl.com/4xv7rxza**


Collaborative Reform Initiative Critical Response
Columbus (Ohio) Division of Police
Independent Review of Use of Force Policies, Procedures, and Protocols
COPS
JENSEN HUGHES

Collaborative Reform Initiative Critical Response Columbus (Ohio) Division of Police: Independent Review of Use of Force Policies, Procedures and Protocols

The COPS Office's Collaborative Reform Initiative – Critical Response program provides targeted technical assistance to law enforcement agencies experiencing high profile events, major incidents, or sensitive issues of varying need. Following a series of organizational and leadership changes at the Columbus (Ohio) Division of Police (CDP), Jensen Hughes conducted a thorough, independent review and analysis of the CDP's policies, procedures and training and operational protocols pertaining to use of force. This publication presents the findings of that review and analysis and the recommendations arising from those findings.

A copy of the publication can be downloaded at **https://tinyurl.com/8shbfh7y**

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FOCUS: Hardware/Software Solutions

18 Artificial Intelligence for Public Safety Trainers and Educators
John G. Peters, Jr., PSDS, CTC, Ph.D.
Most people are familiar with Artificial Intelligence (AI) through tools like Alexa, Siri or ChatGPT, but many still feel apprehensive. It is vital that public safety trainers and educators understand AI and how to use it to enhance training, making it more creative, efficient, effective, and productive.

34 America's Law Enforcement Agents Need a National Narcotics Monitoring and Analysis Database
Michael Brown
Officers currently use various databases for narcotics intelligence, including information on trafficking groups, their distributors, movements, and communications. However, a centralized database which can track and share the identification of existing and new illicit substances in real time as officers discover them could revolutionize their work.

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Eugene Nielsen
The Hartford Consensus represents a significant shift in the approach to handling mass casualty events. By compressing the zones of care and integrating the roles of different responders, it aims to save more lives in the critical moments following such events.

40 NIJ Updated Body Armor Standard: Adapting to Evolving Threats
Eugene Nielsen
In response to the ever-changing landscape of threats faced by law enforcement, the NIJ has recently released an updated body armor standard designed to keep pace with evolving weapons and to improve the safety of female officers.

48 Has Technology Eclipsed Training?
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Those of us who have been in the law enforcement field for 30 or more years continue to marvel at the tools readily available to today's line officers. This is particularly true of firearms and related gear.

56 Updates in the World of Traffic Safety and Enforcement
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Recent advancements in traffic safety and enforcement focus on integrating a combination of new methods, practices, equipment, and strategies for improving road safety through data-driven insights and automated enforcement measures.

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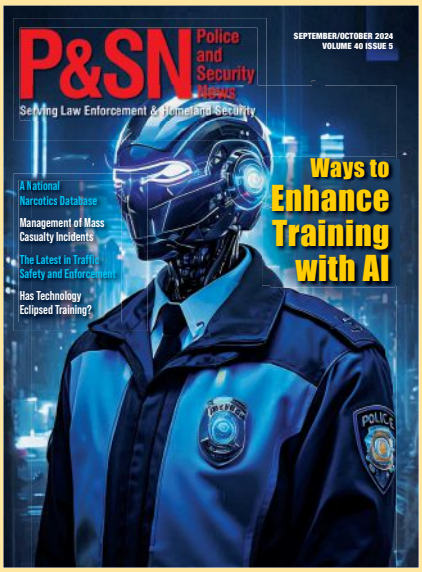
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ON THE COVER

AI can serve as a valuable public safety resource in various ways, particularly when employed by trainers and educators in the instructional design process, enhancing creativity, efficiency, productivity, and professionalism.

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...AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

STANDING TALL(ER)

RAMESH NYBERG

While the rest of the world seems to be losing their sense of decency and decorum – even competence – there's one aspect of our society which is actually getting better. What might that be?

It's us…the police. Allow me to explain.

At the risk of sounding like an old grouch, I submit to you, reader, that in almost every area of society, we are seeing decline. I'm not talking about your favorite stocks or the latest in technology; no, all that stuff is doing remarkably well. I'm talking about *people*. Is customer service at your favorite retail stores, restaurants, service counters, airlines getting better? If you say, yes, I want to know where you live and I might move there. From where I'm standing, human beings have forgotten how to serve and care for one another. We've forgotten the value of an important concept: the customer.

Road rage is up (more than your favorite stocks), math and reading scores of young people are plunging year by year, and teachers are jumping ship in disturbing numbers. I certainly don't have to tell you about how things are going in the world of politics. That used to be an element of our culture which people could discuss pleasantly, regardless of who they did or did not support. Even technology has replaced human interaction with AI machinery, so much so that, when you have an issue (they used to be called "problems," as I recall), you won't even find a phone number on the Web sites of these tech giants to call. Instead, you go to some public forum or get to chat with a robot.

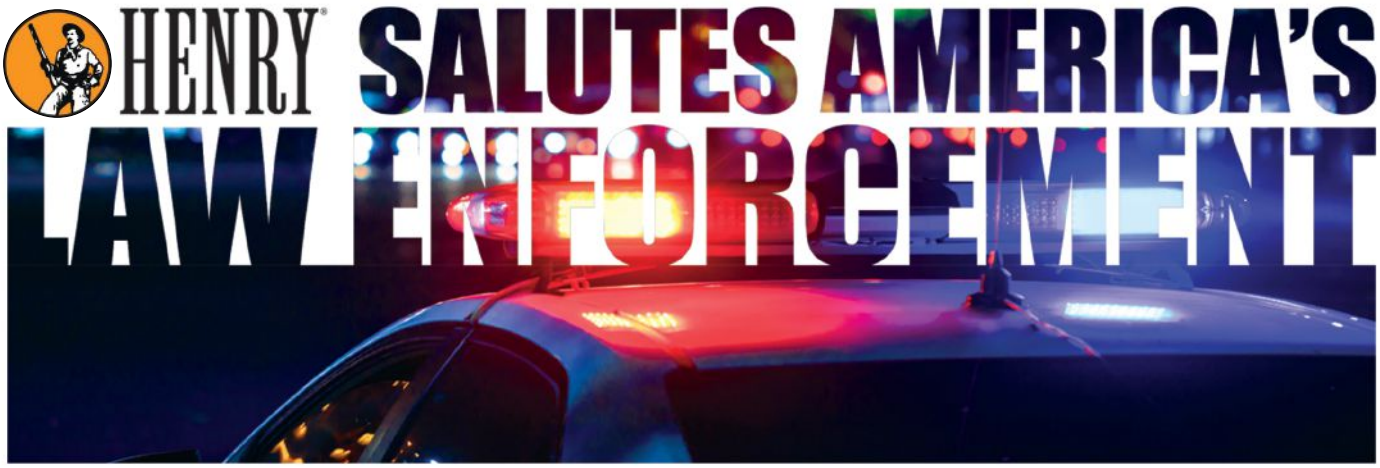
We've forgotten how to talk to each other and no one seems to care.

In the background of this cold, lonely abyss which we used to call human interaction, there is the police. Have we gotten worse, too? I'm going to say "no." Am I biased? Maybe I am, a bit. Let's talk about communication first. I've watched dozens of police/citizen encounters on YouTube and other social media and, for the most part, I see tremendous restraint by uniform officers. Maybe it's the training, or maybe it's the fact that they know they are wearing bodycams and that keeps them in check. It doesn't matter. In watching how some citizens flat-out abuse officers, I imagine that happening in 1982, for example, and my mind creates a scenario wherein the officer has found a way to effect an arrest, one in which the citizen now needs medical treatment. "Contempt of Cop" is what we used to call it and it happened a lot.

Another aspect of policing which has changed dramatically (and for the better): dealing with the mentally ill. In my uniform days, we had zero training on how to deal with mentally ill people, except to know that there was a place called "Crisis Intervention" where we could take them for a Baker Act involuntary detention. There, they could be held up to 72 hours to be examined by psychiatric professionals. We dealt with "Baker Acts" (as we called them) frequently. To most cops, these were just people who disturbed our day with their bizarre behavior and we put them through the Crisis revolving door, just to deal with them – sometimes by arrest – again and again. Today's uniform cops do the same thing, but there's a different approach. Police agencies are better equipped to deal with mental illness than we were.

A couple of years ago, a friend called me about a problem he was having with his 20 something son. The kid was exhibiting paranoid schizophrenic behavior and it terrified him and his family. He asked me to come over. When I got there, the son had bolted out the door and no one could get in touch with him. My friend and I talked for a few minutes and he called the City of Miami Police so that the son could be re-

HENRY SALUTES AMERICA'S LAW ENFORCEMENT



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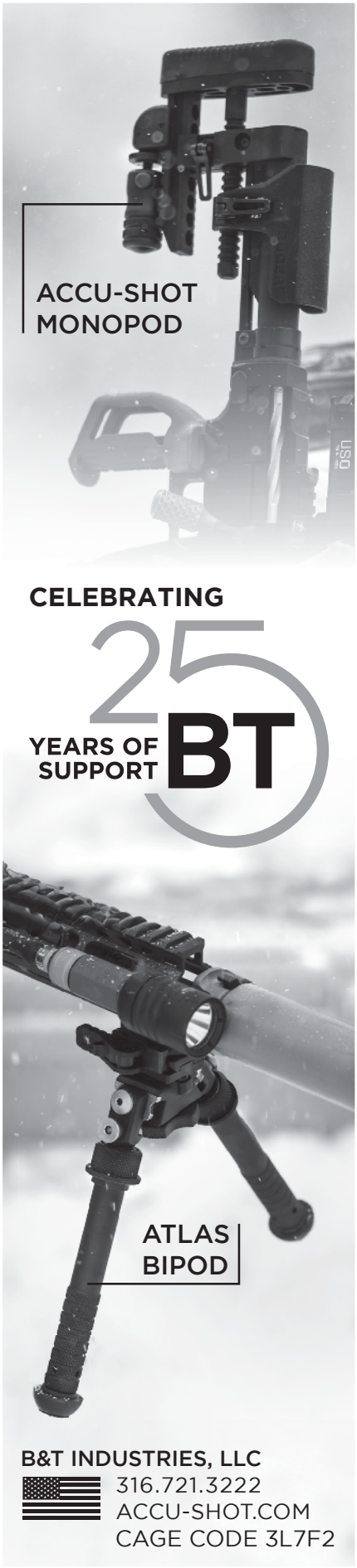

...AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

Continued from page 6

ported as someone who could end up harming himself or someone else. The two officers who showed up were from a special squad designated for mental illness calls. They spoke professionally and their knowledge about different behaviors and symptoms and resources available to the family was admirable. They got the description from my friend and broadcast a BOLO to try and find their son.

While there, one of the officers got notified on the radio that the son was in protective custody under the Baker Act. It turned out that one of their squad members encountered the young man on a street corner downtown acting strangely and made contact with him. He soon realized that the guy needed help *before* the BOLO went out. He *could* have turned his back and walked off. "No one dispatched me…not my call." But, instead, he approached him, recognized the problem and secured him. My friend's son was safe. I left the house feeling good about the City of Miami Police Department, an agency which had more than its share of bad publicity (much of it well deserved) and a reputation which kept getting battered around like a *piñata* for about three decades while I was on the job with the county. Over the past several years, I've conducted training sessions on major case investigations with officers all around the country and I have been impressed – even encouraged – by the quality of police officers and supervisors in the ranks today. Locally, I've had several conversations with young police officers in the 18 years since my retirement, and I can honestly say that the vast majority of them seem brighter, better trained and more professional than we were. And, we were pretty good.

Speaking of *piñatas*, this police profession I am praising has taken some severe pummeling in social media and the press like no other era, but there are fine young people still stepping up to wear the badge and try to make their communities better. The police profession is all about customer service. Yes, they all have much better technology available to do the jobs, but we all know that's not what gives the public confidence in what we do. Rather, it's our presence and our attitude that makes the mark. We don't get tips and we don't ask for praise; we just keep trying to better ourselves so we can be better guardians of the citizens we are sworn to protect.

So, to you folks now carrying the torch for us old bellyachers, I say "Thank you." We're all depending on you now to take care of us because, in the rest of the world, stuff isn't getting any easier and people aren't getting any nicer.

Stay safe out there. **P&SN**

Ramesh Nyberg retired from law enforcement in November 2006 after 27 years of police work. He lives in Miami and teaches criminal justice at a local high school. He also teaches regional law enforcement courses through Training Force, USA. He enjoys getting feedback from readers and can be reached at ramesh.nyberg@gmail.com. Also, Ram has written a new book, Badge, Tie and Gun: Life and Death Journeys of a Miami Detective, which is available on Amazon in both Kindle eBook and paperback. You can find it by visiting ***amazon.com/dp/B0CTQQKQTV***

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https://tinyurl.com/557nzhb4

Automatic Video Recording

LensLock has recently announced **a partnership with Yardarm Technologies**, a manufacturer of sensor hardware. Yardarm's sensors empower law enforcement agencies by seamlessly capturing vital data, automatically triggering body-worn cameras during the deployment of both lethal and nonlethal weapons.

The sensors seamlessly integrate with LensLock body-worn cameras, initiating automatic video recording through Yardarm's proprietary wireless connection technology. These advanced wireless sensors are compatible with both lethal and nonlethal weapons, allowing officers to concentrate on their primary duties without interruption. The pairing process between the wireless device and LensLock cameras is seamless, while the sensor's rugged build guarantees optimal performance and reliability in various field conditions.

lenslock.com

Body-worn and In-car Video Systems

Generate Higher Quality Reports

Axon has recently introduced **Draft One,** a new software product which drafts high-quality police report narratives in seconds based on auto-transcribed, body-worn camera audio. **Draft One** leverages generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and includes a range of critical safeguards, requiring every report to be reviewed and approved by a human officer, ensuring accuracy and accountability of the information before reports are submitted.

Report narratives are written following calls for service and incidents in the community and are used to summarize these incidents within the overall police report. **Draft One** accelerates the task of reporting, leveraging AI to create a draft narrative quickly. Audio from Axon Body 3 and 4 (BWC) camera footage is uploaded over LTE and transcribed automatically, so report drafts are available within five minutes of an incident ending.

axon.com/products/draft-one

Collect, Manage and Share Evidence

Genetec™ Clearance, a Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS), allows evidence found on both body-worn cameras and in-car video systems to be quickly accessed and streamlined to close cases more quickly. It's enabling police departments to manage and distribute media and files from surveillance systems, body cameras, cell phone footage from bystanders and witnesses, and other sources, so there's no need to create or distribute physical copies.

Evidence can be easily imported and shared, helping those working on an investigation across multiple agencies and departments. Being able to set user permissions for viewing, downloading and exporting evidence within **Clearance** allows police departments to further protect and compartmentalize data.

https://tinyurl.com/4veez462

New In-car Rear/Side Camera with Edge AI Human Detection

i-PRO Americas Inc. has recently announced the launch of its new in-car video rear/side camera, the **WV-VCR40W**. The new camera is ideal for law enforcement agencies seeking wide-angle coverage and high-resolution capture of video from the backseat, side or rear window of a vehicle.

The **WV-VCR40W** features AI-enabled human detection within the camera to automatically trigger recordings of critical events, enhancing officer safety and situational awareness. Two distinct edge AI detection modes are available:

In-Vehicle Human Detection – This mode detects human presence in the backseat and automatically triggers in-car video recording, ensuring crucial events are captured without manual intervention; and

Human Approach Alert – This mode detects humans approaching the vehicle, triggering both an in-car video recording and an audible alert, significantly enhancing officer safety by providing real-time alerts to potential threats.

The camera uses a 2.1MP 1/3" CMOS sensor supporting up to 1080p resolution. With its super wide-angle 150/180 degree Field of View (FOV), the innovative lens is specifically designed to minimize distortion and edge warping, resulting in the most useful wide viewing angle offered for a rear/side camera. It also features a configurable IR (Infrared) mode (On/Off/Auto), adapting to various lighting conditions.

https://tinyurl.com/yc2u45pc

Sensor Activated Camera System

Designed exclusively for the Sentinel Camera Systems PROTECTOR II Body-worn Camera, the **Sentinel Metal Sensor** wirelessly activates an officer's body camera if he/she is unable to do it manually. The **Metal Sensor** attaches to a holster and pairs to a body-worn camera. The **Sensor** can detect that the weapon was unholstered and automatically activates the body-worn camera. It uses a 65mAh battery and functions in temperatures ranging from -4 degrees to 130 degrees.

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LEGAL UPDATE

BAN ON "BUMP STOCKS" OVERTURNED

LARRY E. HOLTZ, ESQ.

Bump fire stocks are gun stocks specifically engineered to facilitate bump firing without converting the firearm into an automatic weapon. They enable rapid firing by allowing the trigger to "bump" against the shooter's finger instead of the finger pulling the trigger. This is achieved by utilizing the firearm's recoil and applying constant forward pressure with the non-shooting arm to actuate the trigger.

On June 14, 2024, the United States Supreme Court, in a 6-3 decision in *Garland v. Cargill*, threw out a ban on bump stocks, finding that the Justice Department exceeded its authority by classifying the device, which modifies a semiautomatic weapon to fire with the speed and lethality of military arms, such as a machinegun.

The opinion, authored by Justice Clarence Thomas, strikes down a rule issued in the aftermath of a 2017 massacre in Las Vegas, Nevada, when a gunman using semiautomatic rifles equipped with bump stocks fired hundreds of rounds into a crowd, killing 58 people and wounding over 500 more.

Federal law defines a "machinegun" as "any weapon which shoots, is designed to shoot, or can be readily restored to shoot automatically more than

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one shot, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger." 26 *U.S.C.* §5845(b). With a machinegun, a shooter can fire multiple times, or even continuously, by engaging the trigger only once. This capability distinguishes a machinegun from a semiautomatic firearm. With a semiautomatic firearm, the shooter can fire only one time by engaging the trigger. Using a technique called bump firing, shooters can fire semiautomatic firearms at rates approaching those of some machineguns. Although bump firing does not require any additional equipment, a "bump stock" is an accessory designed to make the technique easier.

"This case asks whether a bump stock – an accessory for a semiautomatic rifle that allows the shooter to rapidly reengage the trigger (and therefore achieve a high rate of fire) – converts the rifle into a 'machinegun.' " *The Court held that it does not. Said the Court, "We conclude that a semiautomatic rifle equipped with a bump stock is not a 'machinegun' because it does not fire more than one shot 'by a single function of the trigger.' "*

For many years, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) consistently took the position that semiautomatic rifles equipped with bump stocks were not machineguns under §5845(b). The ATF abruptly changed course after the 2017 Las Vegas massacre, reversing its previous guidance and amending its regulations to provide that bump stocks are machineguns. *See* 83 *Fed. Reg.* 13442. The new Rule ordered owners of bump stocks either to destroy or surrender them to ATF to avoid criminal prosecution.

In this case, Michael Cargill surrendered two bump stocks to ATF under protest and then filed suit to challenge the Rule, arguing that the ATF lacked statutory authority to promulgate the Rule because bump stocks are not "machineguns" as defined in §5845(b). At the Supreme Court, Justice Thomas, joined by Chief Justice Roberts and Justices Alito, Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, and Barrett, agreed, holding that the ATF exceeded its statutory authority by issuing a Rule that classified a bump stock as a "machinegun" under §5845(b).

Said the Court: A semiautomatic rifle equipped with a bump stock is not a "machinegun" as defined by §5845(b) because: (1) it cannot fire more than one shot "by a single function of the trigger" and (2) even if it could, it would not do so "automatically." A bump stock merely reduces the amount of time that elapses between separate "functions" of the trigger. Accordingly, the ATF exceeded its statutory authority by issuing a Rule which classifies bump stocks as machineguns. P&SN

Larry E. Holtz has served as a Detective Sergeant with the Atlantic City, New Jersey, Police Department; a Deputy Attorney General for the state of New Jersey, and an Assistant County Prosecutor. Presently, Mr. Holtz is the Managing Editor of Blue360° Media, the largest US provider of legal information which is solely focused on serving law enforcement.

Mr. Holtz is a certified police trainer and teaches on a regular basis. He is a member of the bar in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia and is admitted to practice before the federal bar in the District of New Jersey and the Third Circuit.

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NRA COMMUNITY SHIELD

The National Rifle Association recognizes the need to protect America's places of worship, just like the nations' schools. Like schools, our houses of worship are being targeted by evil people, whose goal is to kill and spread fear. When people gather in groups for the purpose of religious worship, they can quickly become easy victims, as we have seen in increasing numbers.

Most leaders in houses of worship do not know where to turn, in an attempt to make their gatherings safer from unauthorized persons or potential violence.

Small, simple changes can make a big difference in protecting your attendees, if you know what to look for.

The NRA has taken its' National School Shield assessor training program and built a sister program named Community Shield.

Community Shield offers training to help houses of worship conduct vulnerability assessments to better protect their attendees from violence. We believe that if the target location has had a vulnerability assessment you can slow or prevent an attack on your attendees, as well as, having a plan to deal with an act of violence, should something occur.

Our Community Shield presentation is not meant to make you a security expert, it was developed for the average, non-law enforcement person, although law enforcement is welcome to attend.

Some of the topics we will cover:

- What is a vulnerability?
- How to mitigate a vulnerability.
- A procedure or plan if an intrusion occurs.
- Should attendees be armed, if so, who?

And more.

For more information contact us at **communityshield@nrahq.org**

LE.NRA.org

PRODUCT HIGHLIGHT

SMITH & WESSON®

Smith & Wesson Brands recently announced the release of the **Bodyguard® 2.0**. When compared to the original model, the **Bodyguard 2.0** boasts a new profile, has a higher capacity and includes modern design enhancements. Chambered in .380 Auto, the pistol ships with a flush fit ten round magazine and an extended 12 round magazine, and models will be available with or without a thumb safety. The **Bodyguard 2.0** has an overall height of four inches, a width just under one inch, and weighs in at 9.8 ounces, unloaded. It also includes a striker-fired design and new flat-face trigger. Out of the box, the pistol ships with a black U-notch rear sight and a bright tritium insert front sight which allows the user to rapidly acquire and stay on target.

smith-wesson.com

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY®

Springfield Armory has announced the launch of its **1911 Agency Optic System (AOS) pistols** which combine the capabilities of the 1911 with modern optics integration – all offered direct from the factory.

AOS employs a series of plates which accommodate a wide range of the industry's most popular red dot sights following the RMR®, Shield, DeltaPoint® Pro and Docter footprints. This flexibility allows shooters to configure their handguns according to their unique preferences.

All **AOS** compatible handguns ship with a cover plate featuring a rear sight which matches the classic contour of the 1911's slide. Machined from billet steel for durability and precise fitment, additional **AOS** plates designed for a wide range of optics are available.

At the time of launch, the **1911 AOS** offerings of pistols include the 1911 Emissary, the 1911 Operator® and the 1911 Ronin®. All three are offered in both 9mm or .45, and also in 5" and 4.25" configurations.

springfield-armory.com

Handguns and Accessories

ALIEN GEAR

Alien Gear has recently announced the expansion of its Rapid Force Level II retention holster to accommodate large lights for GLOCK®, SIG and Smith & Wesson® firearms.

The **Rapid Force Level II Retention, Large Light Holster** offers several key features designed to enhance performance and durability. It now accommodates a wide range of large lights, including those from SIG, Streamlight®, Nightstick®, SureFire®, and others.

The holster provides Level II retention by combining inherent passive retention with an active thumb swipe mechanism. It is compatible with optics, as well as the Axon Signal Sidearm (sensor not included), ensuring versatility in use. The design allows for a fast and intuitive draw, optimizing performance in critical situations.

The holster is compatible with the Quick Disconnect System (QDS). It is available in matte black or tan and is made in the USA.

aliengearholsters.com

FN AMERICA, LLC

The **FN® 509® MRD-LE** series is a line of striker-fired pistols designed specifically for law enforcement and are available in four models ranging from compact to full-size. Key features include a Modular Optics System which allows for red dot optics without the need for adapter plates and a striker-fired system which ensures a consistent trigger pull.

These pistols are chambered in 9mm and offer magazine capacities of ten, 12, 15, or 17 rounds. They feature an enhanced grip texture and ambidextrous controls for better handling. The construction includes a stainless steel slide, a polymer frame and a cold hammer forged barrel.

Many models come with suppressor height sights which co-witness with red dot optics, offering a reliable backup aiming solution. The enhanced trigger is designed to be crisp and consistent, with a short reset for quicker follow-up shots. Additionally, the **FN 509 MRD-LE** series supports a wide range of aftermarket accessories and customization options.

fnamerica.com

TUFLOC

The **TufBox Mini Drawer** by Tufloc is designed to provide secure storage of handguns and other valuables while still maintaining quick and easy access. About the size of a ream of copy paper (3.25" H x 8" W x 12" D), the unit features a fully removable drawer secured by a key lock. Pre-drilled holes in the top and bottom allow it to be mounted in a car trunk, under a car seat, under a desk – or anywhere else it's needed. Made in the USA of powder-coated steel, the **Mini Drawer** is built with the same quality as Tufloc's line of vehicle storage drawers, lockers and gun racks.

tufloc.com/handguns

WALTHER

The **PDP Compact 4"** from Walther features a steel slide and polymer frame which accommodates ten rounds of 9mm ammunition.

Its Performance Duty Trigger offers a distinct feel for repeatable accuracy. Superterrain Serrations on the slide enable quicker, more responsive handling, while the Performance Duty Texture ensures grip in harsh conditions.

Red Dot Ergonomics simplify red-dot sight transitions for new shooters and speed up use for veterans. All PDP models are Red Dot Ready, whether adding an optic or maintaining the factory look.

Also available for training is the **LE Blue Slide T4E Walther PDP Compact.** The .43 Caliber Paint, Dust and Rubber Ammo Marker features an eight shot magazine capacity and an optics-ready slide, making it versatile for various shooting needs.

It comes with four optics plates, compatible with a variety of optics, allowing users to customize their setup. The marker is CO_2 powered, offering a realistic blowback action at an FPS of 330. It is designed with a distinctive blue slide, combining functionality with a unique aesthetic.

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Artificial Intelligence
for Public Safety Trainers and Educators

Most people are familiar with Artificial Intelligence (AI) through tools like Alexa, Siri or ChatGPT, but many still feel apprehensive. It is vital that public safety trainers and educators understand AI and how to use it to enhance training, making it more creative, efficient, effective, and productive.

JOHN G. PETERS, JR., PSDS, CTC, Ph.D.

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Image by Susan Cipriano from Pixabay

Like immigrants arriving in a new country or culture, we, too, are immigrants to the AI culture and need to assimilate its cultural norms (e.g., natural language processing), behaviors (e.g., false information/hallucinations), language (e.g., prompts) and understand its abilities and limitations so we can thrive and be successful in this "new" and exciting culture.

All technology (think E-mail, cell phones, drones, etc.) can be, will be and has been abused, but this is a discussion for a separate upcoming article. Here, the focus is on sharing timely, valid and reliable information so trainers and educators may enhance their ability to use AI tools in traditional or virtual classrooms.

Not surprisingly, an assortment of quickly developed generic AI programs have emerged targeting public safety professionals who may not be fully aware of their limitations. However, without objective statistically reliable data on how AI is being adopted and used in public safety, these generic programs can cause confusion and concern. Why? They may "force fit" information, provide inaccurate or incomplete information, and often use what AI pioneer, Marvin Minky, called "suitcase words" which are so broad they mean almost anything and lead to misunderstandings.

Artificial Intelligence Defined

The term AI is attributed to John McCarthy (one of the "founding fathers" of artificial intelligence) who defined it as "the science and engineering of making intelligent machines, especially intelligent computer programs." Today, AI is hard to define.

AI has many definitions, but none which include what is depicted on television or in the movies – that robots will mysteriously control humans and the Earth. Professor Thomas Malone, MIT Sloan School of Management, offers a simple and understandable AI definition: "Machines acting in ways that seem intelligent." Another AI definition is found in 15 U.S. Code §9401(3): "A machine-based system that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations or decisions influencing real or virtual environments."

Key Components of AI

The three main components of AI are machine learning, Natural Language Processing (NLP) and computer vision. Algorithms which allow computers to learn from data (structured and unstructured) or from themselves form the basis of machine learning. NLP enables machines to understand and respond to human language (e.g., create, compare, etc.). Visual data can be interpreted as aids in decision-making with computer vision.

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Continued from page 18

Crafting and refining prompts is an art. Use free versions of platforms like ChatGPT, Copilot and Gemini to practice and improve your prompt writing skills. The image shown above was created at playground.com, utilizing a 56 word prompt.

Generative AI

This is a form of AI which can create original content that may include text, images, videos, audio, or software. This content is often generated by the instructional designer, trainer or educator in response to his/her desires or requirements.

Prompt Engineering

Many of you reading this article have used AI tools such as OpenAI's ChatGPT, Microsoft's Copilot, Google's Gemini, or similar applications and have made requests with them. These requests are called "prompts." Called "prompt engineering," prompts are the "inputs" given to the AI platform to generate specific "outputs." Like placing an order for food, one tells the waitperson what is wanted (hamburger), unwanted (no pickles), and with other boundaries (cooked medium well). Prompts are similar. You tell the AI platform to perform specific tasks such as create, draw, outline, etc. about a particular topic. Crafting prompts, refining them and setting clear boundaries is indeed a skillful art. Since platforms like ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini, and others offer free versions, take advantage of them to practice and refine your prompt writing skills.

Prompt Elements

Prompt creation contains four key elements: clarity, context, specificity, and structure. The prompt must be clear and concise (clarity) and provide enough background information (context). For example, begin your prompt by stating that you are an adult police academy instructor who instructs other adults ranging in age between 21 and 55, in order to give it context and clarity. Be specific about what you want (the number of multiple-choice questions and the topic) which will give a logical structure to help guide AI to create the desired output. If the output missed the request, most likely the prompt is missing one or more of these elements. The below matrix identifies prompt examples and their purpose.

As you practice prompt writing, there is always room for improvement. The output is limited only by input creativity. Keep in mind, one might request something from AI that it either cannot or will not produce (such as AI refusing to provide certain information or participate in suspected criminal activities).

PROMPT EXAMPLE	PURPOSE
As a trainer of adult police officers, create three multiple-choice questions about why police officers must drive carefully.	To instantly design a quiz to assess learner understanding of the presented information.
Using the same three multiple-choice questions, create an answer key.	Refining the prompt because an answer key was not requested to assist with quiz grading.
Create five goals for a one hour lecture about how much force a police officer is allowed to use in the United States under federal law.	These goals help set the content of the course and evaluate whether the course content will accomplish them.
Create five PowerPoint®-like slides identifying Americans with Disabilities Act accommodations police officers can make when interacting with people who are blind or visually impaired.	Develop slide content which can be modified and placed onto PowerPoint® or similar slides.

Verify! Verify! Verify! + Critical Thinking

Humans and machines must work collectively to avoid output inaccuracies. AI, at times, may "hallucinate" and create unintelligible, inaccurate or fictional information. Examples include lawyers who filed legal briefs created by AI which cited nonexistent cases, or robocalls which misrepresented themselves as humans, or correctly told people to glue cheese onto pizza to keep it from sliding off the slices (accurate, but harmful). Always check on information and reference accuracy by reviewing and verifying the AI output. Periodically, you'll recognize that the AI's output contains factual errors. Remember this simple formula: HP + AI = HCTR, where HP is Human Prompt, AI is Artificial Intelligence, and HCTR is Human Critical Thinking Review. Always critically think about the AI output and verify it for accuracy, reliability and practicality.

Ethical Concerns

Many open AI platforms share input and output with the World Wide Web. Therefore, before uploading documents containing personal or sensitive information, always consider that it may become "public." Some paid platforms have privacy settings to reduce or eliminate this risk.

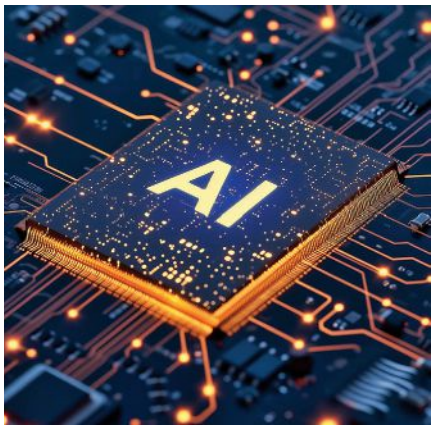
AI, Instructional Design and Training

AI can be used in each step of the instructional design process, whether using ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) or another model. ChatGPT, Copilot or Gemini can be prompted to create instructional goals: "Create ten goals for a lecture on how police officers should drive to avoid accidents." Remember, the instructional designer or trainer is the architect of the prompts for the design or updating of programs. Slide content can also be created. Video creation and editing can easily be done through Descript, OBS Studio, Canva, and similar AI tools. The following table lists a few AI tools which can be used in instructional design and teaching. This is not an exhaustive list.

AI TOOL	PRIMARY PURPOSE
ChatGPT	Virtual assistant used to create content, quizzes, etc.
Copilot	Virtual assistant used to create content, illustrations, etc.
Descript	Video editor
OBS Studio	Video creation and editing
Tome	Develop presentations from scratch (text or documents)
WellSaid Labs	Voice-overs

Legal Concerns

There are several legal concerns regarding the use of AI technology. (Many more will be discussed in a follow-up article to appear in the next issue of *Police and Security News*.) For now, always make sure to follow agency policy about using AI and/or using training content developed by AI. Another concern is copyright. The United States District Court for the District of Columbia held in *Thaler v. Perlmutter* (2023) that United States copyright law only protects works of "human creation," not creation by a nonhuman (AI). Similarly, AI is known to capture information from copyrighted works to create output which may create a copyright violation if used in training (think music, drawings, interviews). Slander and libel may also be concerns depending upon how the information created by AI is used in training or in public. Check with local counsel for other legal concerns and remedies and remember to follow your agency's AI policy and procedures.



AI systems, while powerful, are not infallible. At times, they may generate content which appears plausible, but is actually unintelligible, incorrect or entirely fabricated.

Summary

While AI was not used to create this article, AI is here to stay and, when used properly, it can serve as a *training personnel multiplier*, improving creativity, efficiency, productivity, and professionalism. While it takes education, training and practice to become an AI "native," the return on investing time to learn AI is huge. Agencies need AI policies and procedures to direct and limit discretion about instructional design and training and other AI uses within the agency. Enough said. Go practice AI prompting. For more information about AI training and education, please visit **ipicd.com**. P&SN

John G. Peters, Jr., Ph.D. is a graduate of several AI educational and training programs, including the MIT Sloan School of Management and Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL). An experienced instructional designer and trainer for the Institute for the Prevention of In-Custody Deaths, Inc. and the Americans for Effective Law Enforcement, Inc., he earned a postdoctoral Master of Education degree in Career and Technical Education. Dr. Peters testifies as an expert witness in federal, state and international courts.

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Integrated Management of Intentional Mass Casualty Incidents

EUGENE NIELSEN

The Hartford Consensus represents a significant shift in the approach to handling mass casualty events. By compressing the zones of care and integrating the roles of different responders, it aims to save more lives in the critical moments following such events.

The Hartford Consensus is a set of lifesaving recommendations developed in response to the increasing frequency of active shooter and intentional mass casualty events. Initiated by the American College of Surgeons and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Consensus aims to enhance survivability from such incidents. The approach emphasizes the importance of early hemorrhage control, even by nonmedical bystanders, to improve survival rates.

The Hartford Consensus has significantly influenced trauma systems and policies, leading to a paradigm shift in the management of mass casualty incidents. It proposes an integrated response to active shooter situations and intentional mass casualty events.

THREAT: A Critical Acronym

The Hartford Consensus recommends that an integrated active shooter response should include the critical actions contained in the acronym THREAT:

Threat suppression

Hemorrhage control

Rapid **E**xtrication to safety

Assessment by medical providers

Transport to definitive care

Compressing the Zones of Care

A key component of the Hartford Consensus is the concept of compressing the zones of care. Traditionally, in the immediate aftermath of a mass casualty event, a wide "hot zone" is cordoned off until all threats are suppressed. This approach can lead to some lives being lost through caution.

The Hartford Consensus suggests modifying this plan to allow earlier access to victims outside the real hot zone, the location of the active shooter or a possible bomb. This requires new systems of integration and coordination between law enforcement and other teams of responders to ensure mutual understanding and sequencing of roles.

In the context of law enforcement and emergency response, the terms "hot zone," "warm zone" and "cold zone" are used to denote different levels of threat within an area.

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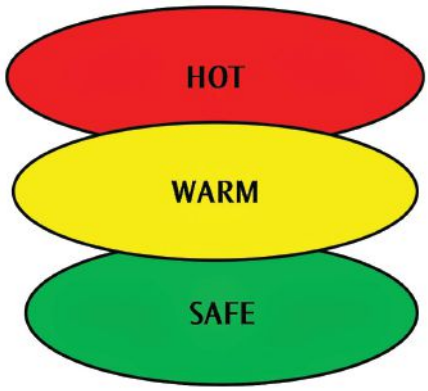
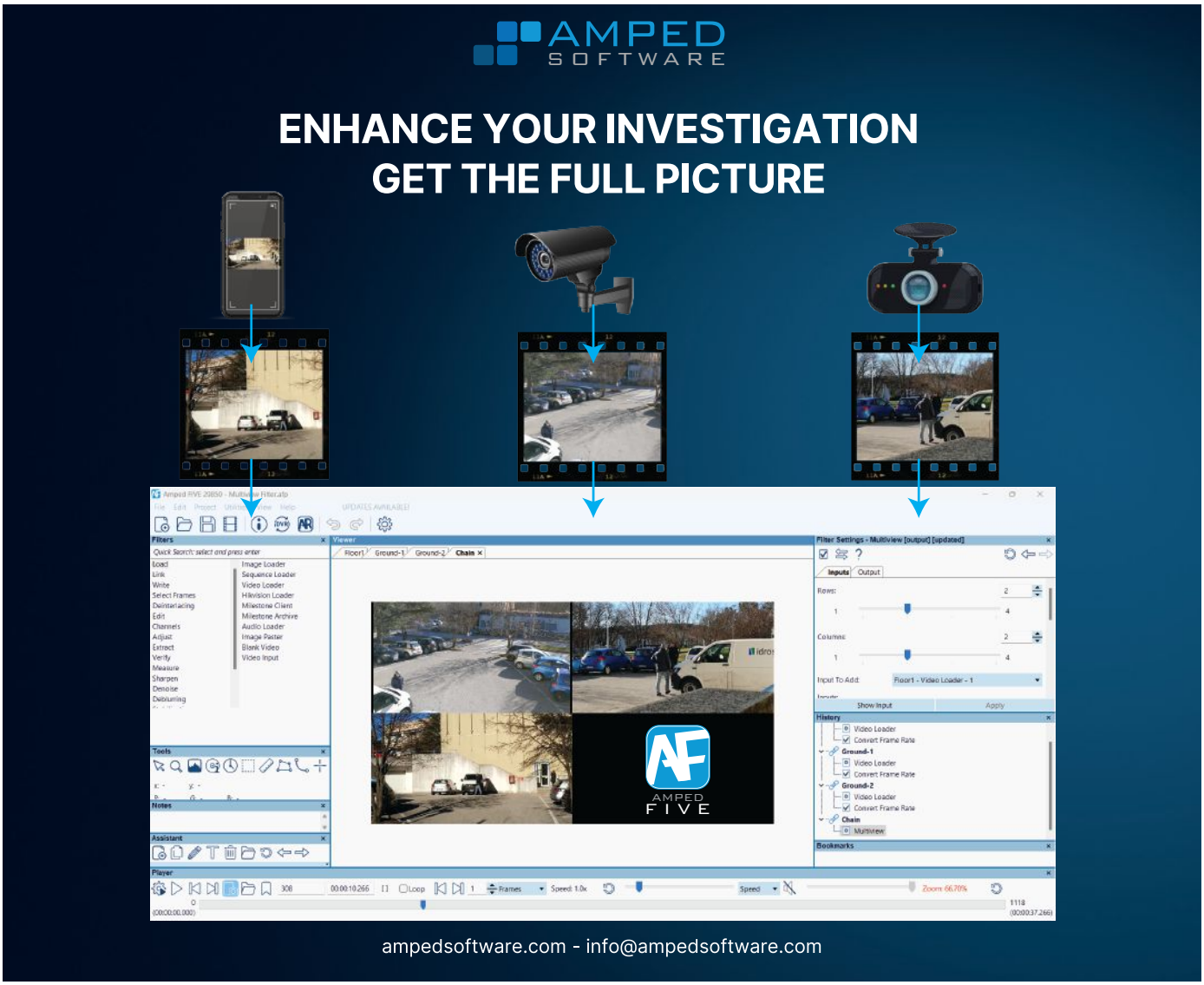


A key aspect of the Hartford Consensus is the idea of compressing the zones of care. This means reducing the boundaries between these zones which allows for a more seamless and efficient transition from one zone to the next.

1. **Hot Zone:** This is the area where a direct and immediate threat exists. The emphasis in this zone is on threat suppression, preventing further casualties, extracting casualties from the high threat area, and implementing control of life-threatening extremity hemorrhage.
2. **Warm Zone:** This is the area where a potential threat exists, but there is no direct or immediate threat. Warm zone care includes the other life-saving interventions associated with applying the MARCH (Massive hemorrhage, Airway, Respiration, Circulation, and Hypothermia) algorithm in the tactical environment. Casualty collection points and rescue task forces are typically employed within the warm zone.
3. **Cold Zone:** This is the area where no significant threat is reasonably

This approach necessitates close coordination and communication among all parties involved, including law enforcement, fire and EMS agencies. It is part of a larger movement towards more integrated and responsive care in emergency scenarios.



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anticipated and additional medical/transport resources may be staged. Cold zone care generally falls under established local, regional or state protocols rather than national tactical casualty care guidelines in the civilian setting.

By compressing these zones, it means that the boundaries between these zones are minimized, allowing for a more efficient transition from one zone to another. This is particularly important in situations where time is of the essence, such as when administering bleeding control techniques. The quicker a casualty can be moved from the hot zone to the warm zone, and then to the cold zone, the sooner they can receive the necessary medical attention, potentially saving more lives.

This approach requires careful coordination and communication among all involved parties, including law enforcement, fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies. It's part of a broader shift towards more integrated and responsive care in emergency situations.

Challenges

Implementing the Hartford Consensus and its approach to compressing the zones of care presents several challenges:

1. **Integration of Different Responders:** The Hartford Consensus requires an integrated response from different responders such as law enforcement officers, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), paramedics, and firefighters. This requires new systems of integration and coordination to ensure mutual understanding and sequencing of roles.
2. **Training and Skill Retention:** The Hartford Consensus emphasizes the importance of training immediate responders and professional first responders in effective hemorrhage control. However, maintaining skill retention over time can be a challenge.
3. **Data Collection and Patient Outcomes:** There is a need for improved data collection on patient outcomes to better quantify the program's impact. This can be challenging due to the complexity and unpredictability of mass casualty events.
4. **Public Resilience:** Enhancing public resilience to potential hazards has been identified as a priority for domestic preparedness. This involves educating the public about the THREAT response and empowering them to act in the event of a mass casualty incident.
5. **Resource Allocation:** Implementing the Hartford Consensus requires resources for training, equipment and system development. Allocating these resources effectively can be a difficult task.

These challenges highlight the complexity of implementing the Hartford Consensus. However, overcoming these issues can lead to significant improvements in the response to and survivability of mass casualty events.

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SALT Triage Guideline

Triage is essential for managing multiple casualty events and an essential component of an integrated response. It prioritizes treatment to use available resources as efficiently as possible and ensures that care is focused on those casualties most likely to benefit from the limited resources available. Without an integrated approach, some patients may arrive at the hospital without having been adequately assessed or triaged at the scene. Therefore, response to these events requires efficiency and coordination.

While several triage systems exist to assist providers in making rapid decisions during such events, there is limited scientific evidence validating any specific system. Additionally, the lack of consistency across jurisdictions within the United States further complicates the application of mass casualty triage.

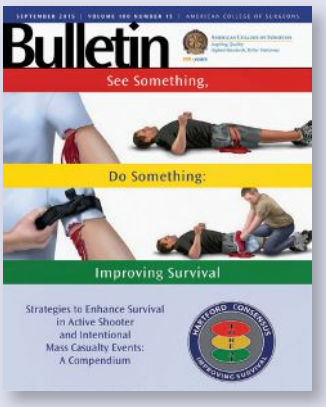
To address these challenges, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) sponsored a working group to develop a standardized triage method. The result is the SALT (Sort, Assess, Lifesaving Interventions, Treatment/Transport) triage guideline. SALT integrates elements from various existing triage systems, creating a comprehensive framework for mass casualty triage nationwide. It aligns with the Model Uniform Core Criteria for Mass Casualty Triage which is currently proposed as the national standard for all such systems. First responders use SALT to rapidly classify casualties and determine their treatment priorities.

The Components of SALT Triage

1. **Sort** – initial sorting of victim based on their immediate needs. This step helps identify those who require immediate attention.
2. **Assess** – a thorough assessment of each victim's condition. It involves evaluating vital signs, injuries and overall severity.
3. **Lifesaving Interventions** – immediate lifesaving measures are applied to victims with critical injuries. These interventions aim to stabilize the patient and prevent further deterioration.
4. **Treatment/Transport** – victims are categorized into different groups:
   - **Immediate** – those needing urgent medical attention.
   - **Delayed** – injuries are serious, but not immediately life-threatening.
   - **Minimal** – minor injuries which can wait for treatment.
   - **Expectant** – victims with severe injuries unlikely to survive despite intervention.

Advantages of SALT Triage

1. **Standardization:** SALT provides a consistent framework for first responders, ensuring uniformity in


Bulletin
See Something,
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Improving Survival
Strategies to Enhance Survival in Active Shooter and Intentional Mass Casualty Events: A Compendium

Hartford Consensus Compendium

Stopthebleed.org is a Web site developed by the American College of Surgeons to provide training and resources on how to control severe bleeding and save lives in emergencies. The Web site offers a series of training resources available online, including a video course and a QR code link to an online version of the course.

A Strategies to Enhance Survival in Active Shooter and Intentional Mass Casualty Events compendium is also available to download at this link: **https://tinyurl.com/2p9ca79k**

This publication serves as a guide for first responders from law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical services, and the military in working together to frame an improved response system.

Stopthebleed.org also has a Resource Hub where training materials to learn about bleeding control techniques and more can be downloaded at **https://tinyurl.com/296cw5a5**

The SALT triage guideline offers a standardized method which integrates the best available science and expert consensus to improve the effectiveness and consistency of mass casualty triage.

assessments and decision-making.

2. **Accuracy:** By eliminating the confusion of traditional "black" and "red" categories, SALT improves accuracy in prioritizing victims.
3. **Nationwide Adoption:** SALT has gained widespread acceptance, making it easier for emergency personnel to collaborate during large-scale incidents.
4. **Efficiency:** SALT triage plays a crucial role in efficiently managing mass casualty incidents, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to save lives.

Applying SALT

Let's break down how SALT is applied in practice.

1. **Global Sorting:** First, responders request any patients who are able to walk to move to a designated area. This clears space for accessing more critical patients. Next, responders ask the remaining patients to wave or make purposeful movements. Patients who did not make purposeful movements are assessed first, as they have the highest likelihood of life-threatening injuries. Patients who were able to make purposeful movements, but unable to walk, are assessed next, followed by those who were able to walk.
2. **Individual Assessment:** During individual assessment, responders perform lifesaving interventions, if necessary, and within their scope of practice. These interventions include controlling major hemorrhage; opening the airway (and providing rescue breaths to children, if necessary); chest decompression; and, if required, administering auto-injector antidotes (for exposure to nerve or chemical agents).

   Responders evaluate the following criteria for each patient:

   - **Breathing:** Is the patient breathing? This helps separate those who are already deceased from those who are not.
   - **Mental status:** Can the patient follow simple commands? Altered mental status may indicate a head injury or other condition.
   - **Peripheral pulse**: Assess for the presence of a peripheral pulse. Absence of a pulse may indicate poor perfusion due to blood loss.
   - **Likelihood of survival given current resources:** This assessment considers available resources at the scene and may change over time.
   - **Respiratory distress:** Respiratory distress following a traumatic injury can be a sign of a life-threatening condition.
3. **Triage Tags:** Based on the assessment, patients are categorized into the following groups.
   - **Expectant:** Victims who are deceased or not expected to survive due to severe injuries.
   - **Immediate:** Victims with severe injuries requiring immediate treatment.

Continued from page 27

- **Delayed:** Victims with potentially severe injuries, but treatment can be delayed for a few hours.
- **Minor:** Victims with minor injuries not requiring immediate treatment.

Training

Adequate training and preparation of Medical First Responders (MFRs) are essential for optimal performance in highly demanding situations like disasters. The training needs to be as realistic and productive as possible, because precise and effective behavior of MFRs under stress is central for ensuring patients' survival and recovery.

The training methods used to prepare MFRs for disasters vary. They include traditional methods such as lectures and real-life scenario training, as well as technology-based methods like computer-based learning and educational videos. While all methods demonstrated effectiveness, the literature indicates that technology-based methods often lead to similar or greater training outcomes than traditional trainings.

SALT triage training is available from the National Disaster Life Support Foundation (NDLSF). The NDLSF is a 501(c)(3) not for profit foundation which oversees a series of educational programs which are designed to better prepare health care professionals and emergency response personnel for mass casualty events.

Mass casualty triage skills are of utmost importance for first responders. These skills allow first responders to efficiently and effectively prioritize care during MCIs, ensuring that the most critically injured or ill individuals receive care first. As such, it is crucial that first responders receive comprehensive and effective training in mass casualty triage skills to ensure they are prepared for these challenging situations.

The SALT triage guideline provides a unified approach, combining the best available science and consensus opinion, to enhance the effectiveness and consistency of mass casualty triage across the United States.

Coordination

Coordinating with multiple agencies during a mass casualty incident can be challenging due to several factors:

1. **Task Flow:** This includes task allocation and scheduling. It can be difficult to determine who should do what and when, especially when multiple agencies are involved.
2. **Resource Allocation:** Determining how to distribute resources effectively can be a challenge, especially when resources are limited.
3. **Information Flow:** Ensuring clear and effective communication between responders is crucial. Miscommunication or lack of communication can lead to confusion and inefficiency.
4. **Decision-Making Speed:** The speed at which decisions are made can impact the effectiveness of the response. Delays in decision-making can lead to delays in response.
5. **Relationships Between Responders:** The relationships between different responders can impact the coordination effort. For example, if there is a lack of trust or understanding between agencies, this can hinder coordination.

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Continued from page 28

6. **Unified Command Approach:** Because multiple agencies may have leadership responsibilities in a mass casualty incident, a unified command approach is essential. This enables disparate entities to collaborate and actively participate in the development of incident goals, objectives and an overarching response strategy.
7. **Doing the Greatest Good for the Greatest Number:** Efforts may need to be directed toward doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people which is counter to day-to-day trauma triage.

These challenges highlight the complexity of coordinating with multiple agencies during a mass casualty incident. However, overcoming these challenges can lead to significant improvements in the response to and survivability of such incidents.

Training for Mass Casualty Events

Ongoing training for mass casualty events and regular practice drills can help prepare first responders and hospital personnel. Public education, such as the STOP THE BLEED® Program, provides opportunities for physicians and first responders to teach the public how to assist in a bleeding emergency before first responders arrive at the scene.

Regular training and exercises can help prepare staff for the "chaotic atmosphere" of a mass casualty incident. Personnel should be pretrained to deliver "just-in-time training" to bystanders and spontaneous volunteers who may arrive at the scene of a mass casualty incident.

Communities should ensure access to necessary equipment and supplies. EMS and other first responders should be properly stocked with trauma bags, tourniquets, tarps, triage tags, boundary tape, and medical supplies.

Preparing for a mass casualty incident requires planning and training in individual knowledge, leadership preparation and team/department/interdepartmental skills.

The Hartford Consensus represents a significant shift in the approach to handling mass casualty events. By compressing the zones of care and integrating the roles of different responders, it aims to save more lives in the critical moments following such events.

Resources

1. STOP THE BLEED (**STOPTHEBLEED.org**)
2. National Disaster Life Support Foundation (**NDLSF.org**) P&SN

Eugene Nielsen is the owner and operator of a firm which provides private intelligence, security consulting and training services. He has a background in law enforcement and a BA degree from the University of California. He has written over 1,500 articles which have been published in various national and international journals and magazines. He was a member of SWAT Magazine*'s contributing staff for more than 20 years.*

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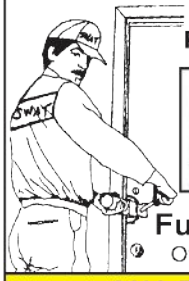

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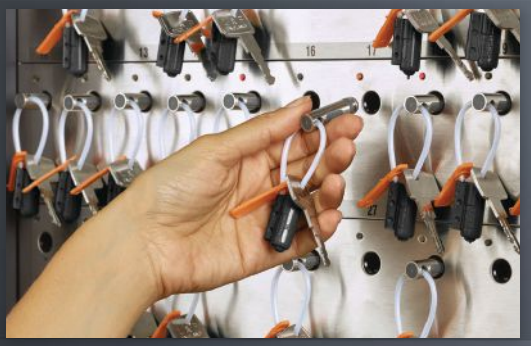

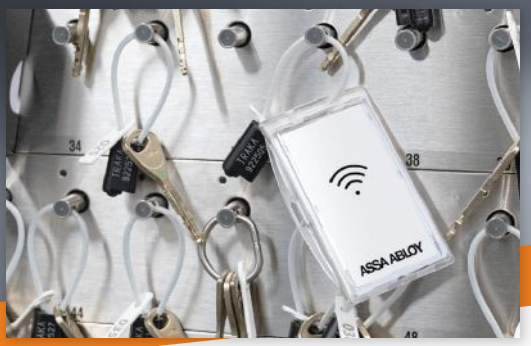

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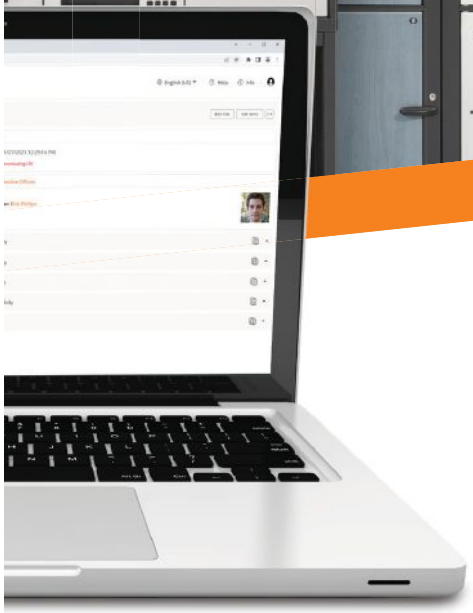

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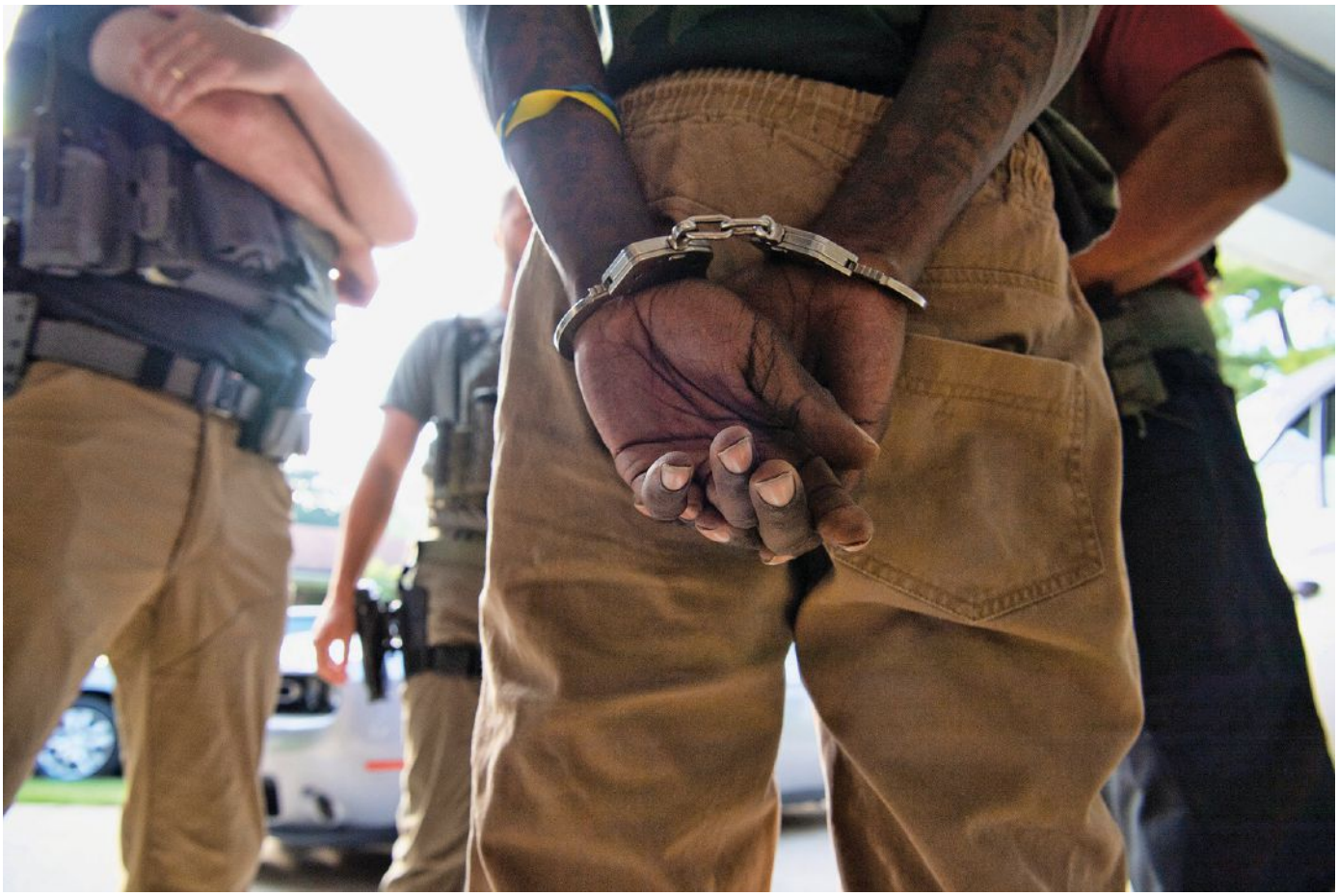
AMERICA'S LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENTS NEED A National Narcotics Monitoring and Analysis Database



MICHAEL BROWN

Officers currently use various databases for narcotics intelligence, including information on trafficking groups, their distributors, movements, and communications. However, a centralized database which can track and share the identification of existing and new illicit substances in real time as officers discover them could revolutionize their work.

The collaboration and coordination among law enforcement departments across America play a pivotal role in addressing the pervasive opioid crisis gripping the nation. Despite concerted efforts to work together, coordinate activities and share vital information, the crucial task of preventing the importation and distribution of narcotics remains predominantly reactive.

Counternarcotics law enforcement depends on actionable intelligence obtained from confidential sources of information and complex investigations, as well as informed deductions and assumptions based on the facts. Based on these facts, law enforcement implements the best strategies to degrade narcotics trafficking.

In the course of their duties, law enforcement officers often come across what they suspect to be illicit substances. Some officers have the necessary tools to inspect and identify the suspicious substances which allows them to make an arrest, provided that due process has been followed. For the majority, however, the lack of procedures for identifying narcotics; sharing their chemical formulations; and, therefore, the lack

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Continued from page 34

of protocols for dealing with them, presents a significant challenge.

If officers can't identify the substance, they can confiscate it and send it to a state laboratory for in-depth analysis. However, this process can take months to deliver a result, allowing the suspects to disappear. Months later, the lab may identify the substance, at which time various departments can share information and tactics to deal with it.

This wait and see approach wastes time and is potentially a get out of jail free card for the suspects. In addition, it also facilitates a new narcotic formula spreading without anyone tracking it. The delay is also unnecessary as it is highly improbable that the substance has never previously been seen within that community or area. With a centralized database where law enforcement can input information and share it in real time, unknown substances can quickly be identified.

Without the database, we are left with America's current narcotics early warning system which is when the coroner calls and notifies law enforcement that there has been a new series of overdose fatalities via a new and unknown chemical formulation. More time is then spent on investigations and tracking leads until the cause is determined, giving the narcotic time to spread like a virus throughout substance user communities leading to an increase in fatality overdoses.

OFFICER SAFETY AT RISK

Identifying narcotics on the scene is not only about effecting an arrest or sharing discoveries about new drugs on the streets. Information on the substance under investigation will also provide officers with the appropriate protocols for handling unknown substance. Many officers now have a heightened awareness about handling fentanyl and the potential of an accidental exposure. There may not be a valid reason to worry, but the concern is there.

With new or combinations of existing narcotics appearing regularly, nobody knows whether future substances will have a dangerous impact if officers inadvertently allow them to make contact with their skin through a small cut or if they breathe in trace amounts. Recently, law enforcement found drug dealers mixing fentanyl and xylazine which exacerbated the fentanyl overdose numbers. Xylazine, known on the streets as "tranq," is a powerful synthetic sedative approved only for veterinary use. The effects of

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using illicit xylazine include necrosis – the rotting of human flesh – which can lead to amputations if the victim survives. This alone may convince officers to send substances to the lab and risk losing the suspect rather than risk contact.

BUDGET CUTS AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION

In the late 1990s, the DEA operated a program where controlled buys were done at regular intervals, not to effect an arrest, but to find out what new drugs were on the streets – "new" includes traditional narcotics which had been modified or cut with different chemicals. These substances were then sent to the DEA lab for analysis, providing the agency with vital counternarcotics information.

The program worked well for some time, but ended due to budget restrictions and other resourcing factors. Today, there is no active narcotics monitoring program in the country at a law enforcement level. This could be one of the factors which allowed fentanyl to become a crisis, killing over 100,000 people in 2023 according to the CDC's National Health Center.

As is the unfortunate norm, by the time authorities are ready to deal with the problem, including training police officers who will be interacting with substance abusers, sellers and traffickers, as well as potentially exposing themselves to the drugs, it is already a crisis.

The additional, nonfatal consequences of widespread opioid addiction include many societal problems. Health risks, such as HIV, hepatitis C, and other bloodborne diseases, increase due to sharing needles and other drug paraphernalia. At the same time, emergency services, hospitals

and treatment centers are often overwhelmed and homelessness, child welfare issues and a host of mental health concerns also surge. These costs are immeasurable in terms of financial, community and human costs.

After the unexpected and tragic 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center, security at airports and border posts was beefed up and No Fly Lists and Terrorist Watchlists were circulated widely – even to other countries. Other less publicized precautions were also implemented to prevent such a

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Continued from page 37

devastating attack from happening again and response protocols were revamped.

CENTRALIZED FEDERAL MONITORING

Similar to the protocols for dealing with terrorist threats, counternarcotics efforts need an additional intelligence sharing strategy, starting with a central database where any law enforcement agency can find real-time, reliable presumptive analysis data on known and unknown drugs they discover in the course of their duties. They also need the ability to input information they uncover to have it analyzed and shared with other departments. This will allow small police departments with limited resources to access the same information as the FBI or DEA and cooperate in proactive prevention rather than a reactive cleanup after the bodies start piling up.

The database must be managed nationally to ensure accuracy and availability to all authorities in the country and even international law enforcement to assist them in their strategies and counternarcotic tactics. It should also be open to harm reduction organizations as they are often the first to see new narcotics and their impact on civilians, playing an essential role in intelligence sharing.

A federal agency is, therefore, the only option to run the database program because it will need funding to run laboratories, employ analysts and set up and maintain the technology stack required to make its findings broadly available. Existing organizations would have budget and human resource restraints preventing them from efficiently maintaining a monitoring system as their focus is on real-time counternarcotics operations.

In addition, a federal agency will also be able to set standards and protocols regarding narcotics identification. One of these standards would be how officers and agents identify narcotics before sending them to laboratories. What is required is a quick, simple testing solution which accurately identifies narcotics at the point of contact without putting officers in harm's way.

IDENTIFY NARCOTICS IN A MINUTE

Raman spectroscopy is well suited for real-time presumptive analysis of narcotics on the scene at a street level. The technology is portable, so accurate readings can be done anywhere, even during a traffic stop. It works by emitting a nondestructive laser at the suspicious substance, causing its molecules to react. This reaction is unique for every substance, providing an accurate reading which assists officers in deciding how to proceed. It also makes it simple to send the specifications of the substance scanned to a centralized database.

The Scientific Working Group for the Analysis of Seized Drugs (SWGDRUG), responsible for supporting the development of recommended standards, techniques, protocols, and policies for the forensic examination of seized drugs, recognizes Raman spectroscopy as one of the Class A analytical techniques for presumptive field testing. It has become one of the standard methodologies for inspecting drugs and helping conduct probable cause searches and seizures.

OUTPLAYING THE CARTELS

It's become clear that the production of synthetic opioids is advancing rapidly due to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Cartels are using AI processing and detailed data analysis to design new opioid products quickly and efficiently, making them harder to detect. There is also a growing concern about the emergence of even more potent opioids than fentanyl in communities. Therefore, the United States' counternarcotics efforts must implement a similar technological strategy to combat these dangerous developments. A federal narcotic database is therefore vital.

The long-term benefits of such a strategy will not only be lower fatality rates, but also reduce the social damage, such as addiction rates, dependence treatments, homelessness, mental illnesses, and the diseases which always accompany widespread addiction.

An effective real-time monitoring program, along with a national database, will be the foundation of a strategic, intelligence-based approach to the narcotics tsunami wreaking havoc in American cities. The program must go beyond just identifying narcotics. Analysis of narcotics, locations and informant information collected nationwide will provide valuable insights into the people responsible for designing and manufacturing narcotics, their precursor chemicals' origins and distribution methods. This level of actionable intelligence and information is essential for preventing future crises.

Creating and maintaining a central monitoring and analysis database would enable authorities to strategically target cartels by limiting their operations and sales, thereby reducing their profits. This would also help prevent another opioid epidemic in America, along with the resulting financial and social burdens, while simultaneously improving society's readiness to safeguard at risk communities and allocate resources to support individuals and communities struggling with substance addiction. P&SN

Michael W. Brown has a distinguished career spanning more than 32 years as a special agent for the Drug Enforcement Administration. Most recently, he was the DEA headquarters staff coordinator for the Office of Foreign Operations for the Middle East-Europe-Afghanistan-India. He is the global director for counternarcotics technology at Rigaku Analytical Devices and he writes in his personal capacity based on his extensive experience in counternarcotics. You can contact him at michael.brown@rigaku.com

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NIJ UPDATED BODY ARMOR STANDARD: ADAPTING TO EVOLVING THREATS

EUGENE NIELSEN

In response to the ever-changing landscape of threats faced by law enforcement, the NIJ has recently released an updated body armor standard designed to keep pace with evolving weapons and to improve the safety of female officers.

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the research, development and evaluation arm of the US Department of Justice (DOJ), has a long-standing history of publishing performance standards for ballistic-resistant police body armor. For over 50 years, these standards have been the benchmark for ensuring the safety and reliability of body armor used by law enforcement personnel across the United States.

The NIJ has been dedicated to enhancing officer safety since the early 1970s. The development of the NIJ's performance standards for ballistic-resistant police body armor commenced in 1972, marking the introduction of the first performance standard (0101.00) for such armor. The NIJ's body armor compliance testing ensures that the body armor employed by law enforcement satisfies minimum performance requirements, providing protection against common threats from handgun and rifle fire.

The initial development of these standards was undertaken by the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NILECJ), in conjunction with the Law Enforcement Standards Laboratory (LESL) at the National Bureau of Standards (NBS). The latter is now known as the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

There have been a total of seven revisions of the standard, including the new NIJ Standard 0101.07. Each revision aims to improve the standards and testing methods to ensure the highest level of safety for law enforcement officers.

The New Standard: NIJ Standard 0101.07

The updated standard, known as Ballistic Resistance of Body Armor NIJ Standard 0101.07, along with the new Specification for NIJ Ballistic Protection Levels and Associated Test Threats, NIJ Standard 0123.00, marks a significant evolution in the certification and testing of body armor.

Key Changes and Improvements

- **Enhanced Testing Methods:** The new standard introduces improvements to the test methods, particularly for armor designed for women, ensuring a better fit and greater protection.
- **Perforation and Backface Deformation Testing:** The updated

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standard includes additional shot testing on soft armor panels and reconfigured testing on hard armor plates to better simulate real-world threats.

- **Updated Threat Response:** The revised standards define ballistic threats identified by US law enforcement as representative of current prevalent threats, ensuring that the armor is tested against realistic dangers.

Implementation Timeline

The NIJ Compliance Testing Program ceased accepting new armor models for testing under the old standard in early 2024. The National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) will use the new NIJ Standard 0101.07 to accredit ballistics laboratories and, in Spring 2024, the program began testing, evaluation and certification of ballistic-resistant body armor to the updated standard.

The Importance of Compliance

Compliance with these standards is voluntary, yet crucial. Manufacturers are responsible for submitting their products for testing and the NIJ publishes a Compliant Products List of armor models which meet program requirements. This list is an essential resource for law enforcement agencies to ensure they are purchasing armor which has been rigorously tested and certified to provide the necessary level of protection.

Controversies

While the updated NIJ body armor standards have been generally well received for their advancements in safety and testing, there are some concerns and discussions within the law enforcement community. A few points of contention have emerged:

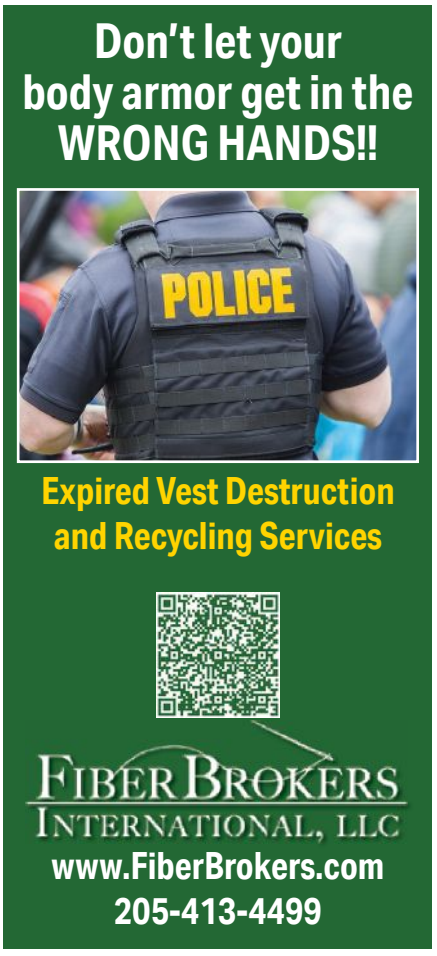
- **Cost and Funding:** At a time when police funding is under scrutiny, the cost implications of transitioning to new body armor standards are a concern. The lowest bid often wins contracts and there is a debate on whether the updated standards will lead to higher costs for departments.
- **Voluntary Compliance:** The NIJ Compliance Testing Program is voluntary and some argue that this could lead to inconsistencies in the adoption and use of the updated standards across different law enforcement agencies.
- **Testing and Certification:** There is a discussion about the transition period and the ceasing of acceptance of new armor models for testing under the old standard. Law enforcement agencies are anticipating the availability of body armor certified to the 0101.07 standard which is expected in late 2024 or early 2025.

These points reflect the ongoing dialogue among stakeholders as they work to balance the need for improved protection with practical considerations such as cost and implementation timelines.

Ensuring Compliance

Law enforcement agencies can ensure compliance with the new NIJ body armor standards by following these steps:

- **Review the Compliant Products**



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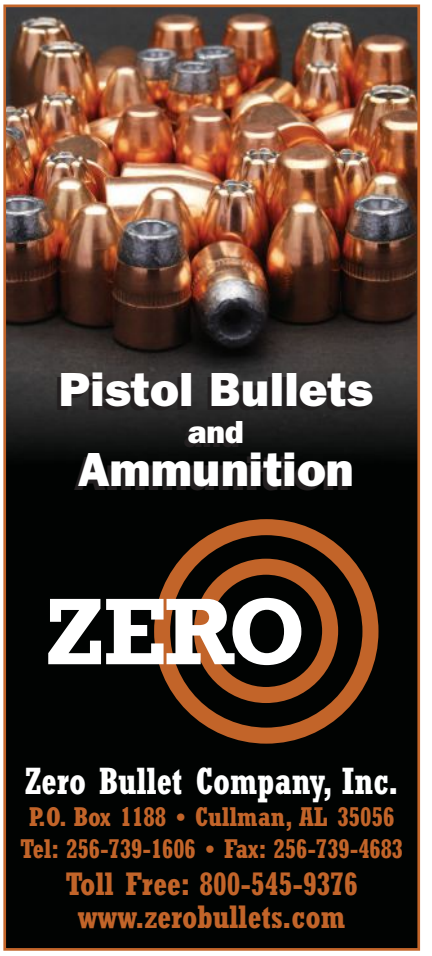

NRA 2023 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

On Friday, July 14th, 2023, just before 3:00 PM, officers of the Fargo, North Dakota Police Department were investigating a traffic accident on a thoroughfare in Fargo when, without warning, they came under fire from an unknown assailant who was firing a .223 caliber rifle.

The assailant, who was parked facing the roadway in a nearby parking lot, began firing at three officers who had walked near his vehicle, striking all three. The suspect continued to fire as he exited his vehicle, also firing at the people involved in the collision, as well as the firefighters who responded to the crash. One of the three officers, Jake Wallin, managed to fire one round before collapsing.

Officer Zachary Robinson, who was standing in the street at the time the gunfire erupted, immediately saw the suspect and returned fire with his handgun while radioing for assistance and taking cover behind a vehicle.

Robinson continued to engage the assailant as he moved behind his vehicle. Officer Robinson advanced on the suspect, who was on the ground behind the vehicle, and commanded him to drop the handgun he now had in his hand. The suspect was unresponsive, as he had succumbed to his wounds.

Officer Zachery Robinson exhibited exceptional bravery and courage while facing the armed, violent suspect. Officer Robinson's actions not only saved his life, but the lives of fellow officers and citizens. As such, it is with great honor and pride that the National Rifle Association names Officer Zachary Robinson as the 2023 NRA Law Enforcement Officer of the Year!

Officer Zachary Robinson

Fargo, North Dakota Police Department

"Officer Robinson's commitment to protecting his fellow officers and citizens is a testament to his courage and demonstrates the very best of our Nation's finest who don the uniform of law and order. The NRA proudly supports the heroic men and women of law enforcement and we are grateful for their service to our country."

NRA President, Charles Cotton.

Forms for nominating candidates for the NRA Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award may be downloaded at http://le.nra.org/documents/pdf/law/leoy.pdf.

For more information about NRA's Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award and its Law Enforcement Division, call (703) 267-1632 or send an e-mail to LE@nrahq.org.

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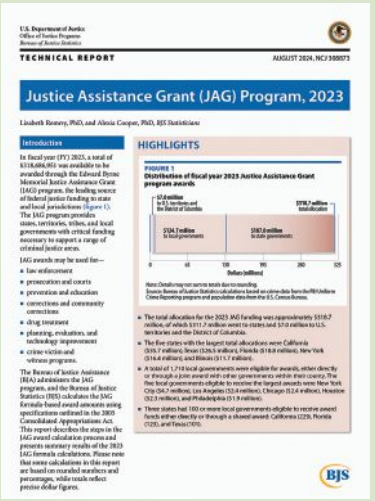
New Report Details Edward Byrne Memorial JAG 2023 Allocations


U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Statistics

TECHNICAL REPORT

AUGUST 2024, NCJ 308973

Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program, 2023

Lisabeth Rumney, PhD, and Alexia Cooper, PhD, BJS Statisticians

Introduction

HIGHLIGHTS

FIGURE 1
Distribution of fiscal year 2023 Justice Assistance Grant program awards

$7.0 million to U.S. territories and the District of Columbia

$318.7 million total allocation

$124.7 million to local governments

$187.0 million to state governments

0 | 65 | 130 | 195 | 260 | 325

Dollars (millions)

BJS

BJS has released *Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program, 2023*. The report describes the steps used to calculate the Edward Byrne Memorial JAG formula-based award amounts. It also presents summary results of the fiscal year 2023 calculations. The Bureau of Justice Assistance administers the program which provides states, tribes and local governments with critical funding necessary to support a range of criminal justice areas. States and localities receive funds based on their resident population reported by the US Census Bureau and on violent crime data reported to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program.

Highlights

The total allocation for the 2023 JAG funding was approximately $318.7 million, of which $311.7 million went to states and $7.0 million to U.S. territories and the District of Columbia.

The five states with the largest total allocations were California ($35.7 million), Texas ($26.5 million), Florida ($18.8 million), New York ($16.4 million), and Illinois ($11.7 million).

A total of 1,710 local governments were eligible for awards, either directly or through a joint award with other governments within their county. The five local governments eligible to receive the largest awards were New York City ($4.7 million), Los Angeles ($2.4 million), Chicago ($2.4 million), Houston ($2.3 million), and Philadelphia ($1.9 million).

Three states had 100 or more local governments eligible to receive award funds either directly or through a shared award: California (229), Florida (123) and Texas (101).

Copies of this new report can be downloaded at **https://tinyurl.com/y9596drn**

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List: Agencies should consult the NIJ's Compliant Products List to identify body armor models which meet the updated standards.

- **Understand the Standards:** Agencies need to familiarize themselves with the specifics of the NIJ Standard 0101.07 and associated test threats outlined in NIJ Standard 0123.002.
- **Participate in NIJ's Compliance Testing Program:** By participating in the NIJ's Compliance Testing Program, agencies can be confident that the body armor they purchase has been tested and certified to meet the minimum performance requirements.
- **Follow-up Inspections:** Agencies should be aware of the follow-up inspection and testing requirements to ensure that the body armor worn by officers remains safe and reliable over time.
- **Manufacturer's Role:** Agencies should work closely with manufacturers who are responsible for submitting their products for NIJ compliance testing and ensuring that their body armor models meet workmanship and labeling requirements.

By adhering to these guidelines, law enforcement agencies can effectively navigate the transition to the updated body armor standards and maintain the highest level of protection for their personnel.

Funding

There are several grants and funding opportunities available for law enforcement agencies to purchase compliant body armor:

- **Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP):** This program reimburses states, units of local government and federally recognized Indian tribes for up to 50% of the cost of body armor vests purchased for law enforcement officers. (**https://tinyurl.com/mr453wf**)
- **Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program:** JAG is one of the largest sources of grant funding to support law enforcement equipment purchases, including tactical and special operations equipment and gear. (**https://tinyurl.com/54hnxt38**)
- **National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA):** NTOA awards funds for vehicles and equipment to SWAT teams which are members of the association. (**ntoa.org**)
- **St. Michael's Shield Project:** This nonprofit organization provides free body armor through Vest for Life. (**vestforlife.com**)

Law enforcement agencies can explore these options to secure funding for body armor which meets the new NIJ standard.

Summing Up

The updated NIJ body armor standards represent a proactive approach to officer safety, reflecting the dynamic nature of threats in the field. By continuously revising and improving these standards, the NIJ demonstrates its commitment to the protection and well-being of law enforcement personnel, ensuring that they have the best possible defense against the dangers they face in the line of duty.

For more detailed information, you can visit the official NIJ Web site at **https://tinyurl.com/49837udc** P&SN

Eugene Nielsen is the owner and operator of a firm which provides private intelligence, security consulting and training services. He has a background in law enforcement and a BA degree from the University of California. He has written over 1,500 articles which have been published in various national and international journals and magazines. He was a member of SWAT Magazine*'s contributing staff for more than 20 years.*

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Has TECHNOLOGY Eclipsed TRAINING?

Those of us who have been in the law enforcement field for 30 or more years continue to marvel at the tools readily available to today's line officers. This is particularly true of firearms and related gear.

MIKE BOYLE

Back in the day, I was issued a six-shot revolver and my Sam Browne belt contained a pair of dump pouches, a hickory stick and a set of handcuffs. Body armor was not an issued item and our shoulder weapons – mostly shotguns – were personally owned. Contemporary officers would absolutely consider our gear grossly inadequate, but, nonetheless, we got the job done and never gave it a second thought.

If an officer from the 1970s could have somehow teleported himself to the present time, he would have been in awe of the evolution of police weaponry. Revolvers have given way to autopistols. Patrol rifles have pushed shotguns to the back burner and have given officers a very decisive tool for close quarters problems, as well as the ability to reach out to far greater distances than a pistol or shotgun. Security holsters, red dot optics, lasers, weapon mounted lights, and much improved ammunition round out the picture.

But, from an officer safety perspective, are we really better off? Although the number of officers feloniously slain in the line of duty has dropped since the 1970s, it is not for lack of trying on the part of the bad guys. What about officer performance in deadly force situations? That remains a mixed bag and, although we seem to be making progress, there is still a long way to go.

No Free Lunch

I will confess to being as much of a gearhead as the next guy, but I tread very carefully when selecting equipment which I or others may have to use in a worst-case scenario. Exactly how is this new widget better? Does it correct deficiencies in what has come before? Will it somehow enhance user performance?

A trend I have noted among many law enforcement agencies is that the quick fix to a problem is to throw money at it and hopefully it will go away. The harsh reality is very often it's not the hardware side of the equation, but the software

Red dot optics are the hot ticket these days, but require a thorough and comprehensive training program.

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Use the questions below to start the conversation with your local school leaders about how we can work together to protect our children:

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2. Does our school work with local law enforcement and emergency responders in crisis planning and training?
3. When was our emergency operations/ crisis management plan last reviewed?
4. What types of drills are conducted at our school and at what frequency?
5. Are all exterior doors of our school locked during instructional hours?
6. Are all visitors to our school required to check in with the main office?
7. Are students and staff trained on how to identify and report suspicious or concerning behaviors/comments?
8. Does our school have a behavioral threat assessment team?
9. If there is an emergency, how and when are parents/guardians notified?
10. Do we have designated security personnel assigned to our school? If so, are they armed/unarmed?

OUR KIDS ARE OUR RESPONSIBILITY. IT'S NOT JUST OUR DUTY TO PROTECT THEM, IT'S OUR RIGHT TO PROTECT THEM.

For more information and resources, visit:
www.nraschoolshield.org

Continued from page 48

side which needs to be addressed.

Some years ago, I received a phone call from the lead trainer of another agency who told me his outfit was swapping off their traditional pump-action shotguns for a state-of-the-art autoloader. A short time before our conversation, one of their officers had been involved in a blue on blue shooting and it was felt that an upgrade in weaponry would have made a difference. When I asked exactly what they were going to do differently in their training considering the manual of arms was more complicated, I knew I had struck a bad chord. Better gear may indeed help the cause, but only supported by a thorough and comprehensive training program.

The Streamlight® ProTac® 2.0 gives an officer the ability to reach out beyond practical pistol distance, but training is required.

I recognize that training can be very expensive when you consider the cost of ammunition, support equipment, an officer's time, paying outside contract instructors, or renting a training facility. But, unless you are willing to commit to proper training to get officers up to speed with the new gear, you're only spinning your wheels.

Good training makes a huge difference. As we all know, rifles have pretty much replaced traditional shotguns as the shoulder weapon of choice for patrol officers. One of my training associates ran his troops through an intense, multiday training program when his outfit purchased rifles for all of their officers. A very short time later, an officer who was not one of their better shooters responded to an incident where an armed assailant was some 80 yards away. One shot solved the problem. Did training make a difference? It absolutely did.

Over the last few years, the gear in everyday use by patrol officers has evolved at a rapid clip. In the not so distant past, semiauto rifles, lasers, weapon mounted lights, external body armor carriers, and red dot sights were solely in the domain of SWAT officers. But, now, all of that has changed. Let's take a quick look at some of these innovations and see if we are moving in the right direction.

Does your patrol rifle program address basic operational skills, such as reloading, in addition to marksmanship?

Red Dot Sights

No doubt, the hottest ticket in police firearms is miniature red dot sights for

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*Line of Duty Death Insurance Benefit may not be available in all states. NRA is not an insurance company. Insurance benefits are subject to the terms, conditions, exclusions, and limitations contained in the insurance policy issued by the insurance company. Visit le.nra.org/benefits for additional information.

THE NRA "BACKS THE BLUE"

LE.NRA.org

Continued from page 50

Officers need to get off the square range and train in dynamic exercises which include movement and use of cover.

handguns. At this point in time, every major manufacturer of pistols used by law enforcement has expanded their line to include variants which will accommodate a red dot sight. This, of course, has caused holster manufacturers to follow suit and duty rigs which will accommodate a red dot equipped pistol are available from Alien Gear, Blackhawk® and Safariland®.

I was not the first kid on the block with a red dot equipped pistol, but I knew that, if I wanted to remain relevant as a trainer, I had to get with the program. Truth be told, my first efforts with a red dot on a pistol were not pretty and I really had to wonder what, if any, value it had for the law enforcement officer. My perspective began to change when I took a course on red dot sights and began to apply what I learned. In short order, I realized there may be something to this whole red dot thing!

To cut right to the chase, shooters who cut their teeth on iron sights and have used them for many years often struggle when going to a red dot and my experience is hardly unusual. On the other hand, new shooters seem to pick it up a bit faster since they don't have old habits to break.

I would offer that going from iron sights to a red dot is just as big of a change as when we went from revolvers to autoloading pistols. I don't suppose there are that many officers today who were on the job when that happened, but it was a huge game changer. Today, there are all sorts of resources and very well credentialed trainers available who can guide you through the process. There is really nothing magic about mastering red dot sights and what it comes down to is getting familiar with the sighting fundamentals and slowly working up to game speed. This simply isn't going to happen over the course of an afternoon and a really solid program will probably take three days to build officer confidence.

Will a red dot sight make for better shooters? That very well may be, but only if their training is up to the task. In fact, officers not afforded proper training may find their performance suffers. To my thinking, if you can't make the effort to follow through with some solid training, you are better served with traditional irons. Along similar lines, red dot sights will never win over the hearts and minds of many shooters and I wouldn't categorize anyone as a Fudd if they prefer to stick with iron sights. At this point in time, my training pistol is red dot equipped, but my concealed carry pistol wears irons and I have no plan to switch anytime soon.

Weapon Mounted Lights

Affixing a weapon mounted light affords the user a great many advantages over a handheld flashlight. Coordinating a handheld light with a pistol can be difficult even in a static, low stress range environment.

Affixing a WML to the pistol automatically lines up the light with the muzzle of the gun. Basic operational skills such as drawing from the holster and snapping into a shooting position, reloading, and clearing stoppages are so much easier. When you consider that the majority of police action shootings unfold under less than optimum light conditions, a WML affords a huge advantage. I, for one, am fond of illuminators which also feature a laser aimer in addition to the light.

So, what's not to like? With a little bit of training, a WML light on your pistol can be a lifesaver. Should you ignore training, that same light can be a huge liability. For example, some officers have not gotten the message that WMLs are a threat management tool and should not be used for routine searching and probing and are a supplement – not a replacement for a handheld light. Training should include transitions from a low threat situation with a handheld flashlight to the WML as the danger factor increases. Using a pistol with a WML for routine searching will inevitably cause

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In the event of a stoppage or an empty gun when dealing with a close quarters threat, officers need to be familiar with transitioning to the pistol.

the muzzle of the pistol to cover something or somebody it shouldn't.

Another training issue is switch manipulation. Most WMLs for pistols feature a rocker switch or a button which should be activated with the thumb of the support hand. Using the trigger finger to activate a WML is a recipe for disaster and officers who fall into that bad habit are prime candidates to have a negligent discharge when stress levels run high. Your trigger finger has one job to do and it's important that training stresses the use of the support hand thumb to activate the light.

WMLs on shoulder weapons also have much to offer. New generation high candela lights can reach out great distances and give an officer a huge advantage in a low light fight. Most WMLs used on rifles, shotguns and SMGs feature an easy to activate pressure switch and officers need to train to a level where light activation becomes intuitive.

Low light training should include dynamic scenarios where officers have to move, use cover and reload. Getting off the square range with predictable phases of fire, and including a dynamic drill or two in the mix, will reinforce both officer skill and confidence they need in order to prevail in a deadly encounter.

Rifles Take the Lead

The concept of the patrol rifle has caught on in a very big way for a lot of reasons. Unlike a shotgun, recoil is a nonissue and you can reach out well beyond practical pistol distance. At closer distances, just about everyone can place hits with far greater precision than with a pistol. Unlike a pump shotgun, there is some continuity between a rifle and pistol in that they are self-loading, magazine fed systems which should speed up the learning curve.

There is no question at all that AR pattern rifles are easy to shoot to an acceptable standard. Unfortunately, it has been my observation that many departments shortchange their officers and, as long as they can meet the minimum marksmanship standard, they are good to go. I am familiar with agencies which have issued rifles to officers with only one day of training, half of which consisted of butt time. To be truly proficient with any weapon system, rifles included, you need to place a heavy emphasis on basic operational skills as well as marksmanship. That just isn't happening with eight hours of training.

Again, the basics (including qualification) are mastered on the square range. But, once officers have a command of practical marksmanship and basic gun handling, more dynamic exercises should be incorporated into training including movement, use of cover, shooting around vehicles, low light, and two officer tactics. Again, minimum

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Continued from page 53

standard will yield minimum results and any advantage afforded by a rifle will be forfeited.

Holster Skills

Duty holsters with multiple levels of retention are widely utilized by uniformed law enforcement professionals and, like other types of critical gear, require training. In my basic classes for new officers, we continue to devote quite a bit of time to holster skills before we move on to live fire. Drills utilized in our in-service training require a fast response from the holster to achieve a satisfactory score and I don't think this is at all unreasonable. The bad guy already knows what he is going to do and has put his plan into action while you are playing catch-up. When you factor in a little dose of reality, those par time standards on the qualification course begin to seem a little too generous.

Contemporary duty holsters feature multiple levels of retention. The good news is that a practiced hand can release them in a single fluid motion and draw in a very snappy manner. Also, that draw practice can be done off the range (unloaded gun, check it twice) to minimize draw time. Considering that a determined adversary with a contact weapon can close a seven yard gap in about 1.5 seconds might give you some perspective on why a fast, efficient draw stroke is critical.

Can you draw with your support hand? In the event of an injury to the dominant side, the ability to draw with the support hand is critical. External vest carriers have become more popular in recent years and this is yet another hurdle to cross, particularly when combined with a security holster. After practicing this, several officers in my outfit relocated gear affixed to their vest for better weapon access.

Even in the age of Level III security holsters, weapon retention training remains critical. I'm sure many of you have also seen videos of incarcerated criminals practicing gun snatches in the prison yard. Without question, some highly motivated gangbangers have already figured out how to defeat security measures in popular retention holsters. You just better have a Plan B!

Putting the Priorities in Perspective

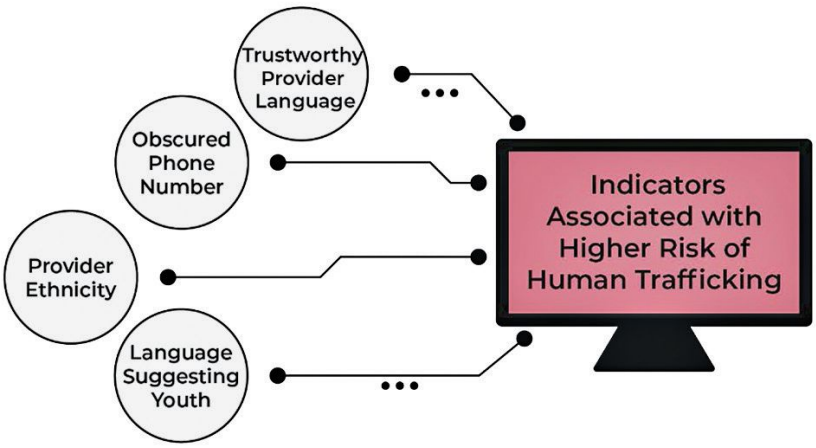
State-of-the-art gear is indeed important, but it still takes a back seat to mindset, tactics and skill at arms. An upgrade in equipment can make a good shooter better, but poor shooters will not reap any benefit, especially if they aren't properly trained. If you are in a position to upgrade the equipment your officers use on the job, make sure that proper training is part of the package. Without this critical component, officers may "figure it out," but it may very well be the wrong way.

Sadly, there are still far too many agencies which are content just letting their officers slide along and only perform training which is minimally required. In an era of time where officers' actions are constantly under the microscope, this is indeed tragic. If your department's training comes up short in use-of-force training and the tools you utilize to keep yourself and others safe, you may have to go find it on your own. After all, it's your life. P&SN

Captain Mike Boyle served with the New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife, Bureau of Law Enforcement, and has been an active firearms instructor for more than 30 years. He has been an assistant police academy director and remains active as an academy rangemaster and instructor. Mike has served on the Board of Directors of the International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors (IALEFI) since 1996. He is the architect and coordinator of IALEFI's Master Instructor Development Program.

NEWS

UNCONVENTIONAL WISDOM: Research Shakes Up Assumptions About Sex Trafficking Clues in Online Escort Ads



A new study found that many widely assumed indicators of trafficking in online escort ads are likely not reliable – but some are.

The research builds on our knowledge about how traffickers construct and use advertising when trafficking victims and helps differentiate between those for consensual sex work.

In addition to key findings, researchers developed a practice guide to help law enforcement and other practitioners uncover more victims; build trafficking cases; and train investigators, prosecutors, judges, and victim service providers.

A copy of the full article can be read at **https://tinyurl.com/wvfwekfx**

NEWS

Tactical Response and Operations Standard for Law Enforcement Agencies
National Tactical Officers Association
Public Order Response and Operations Standards
National Tactical Officers Association

NTOA Releases new Public Order and Tactical Response Operations Standards

The National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA) has announced the release of the latest versions of the Tactical Response Operations Standards (TROS) and the newly created Public Order Standards. These new standards signify a major milestone in the ongoing commitment to professionalism, top service and accountability within the law enforcement community.

The TROS and new Public Order Standards are invaluable resources, equipping law enforcement professionals with the critical information necessary to handle complex and challenging situations effectively.

The updated TROS reflects the ever evolving landscape of tactical operations and offers the latest best practices in the field. These standards encompass a wide range of areas, including tactical response, crisis negotiation, Tactical Emergency Medical Services (TEMS), active shooter incidents, hostage rescue, high-risk warrant service, and more. By adhering to these standards, SWAT teams can enhance their operational effectiveness, minimize risks and safeguard both the public and law enforcement personnel.

Similarly, the new Public Order Standards focus on maintaining order during large-scale events, protests and civil unrest. These standards address crowd management techniques, de-escalation strategies, crowd dispersal methodologies, and the appropriate use of non-lethal force options. By establishing clear guidelines, law enforcement agencies can ensure that public order operations are conducted with the utmost professionalism, respect for human rights, adherence to constitutional rights, and minimal impact on the community.

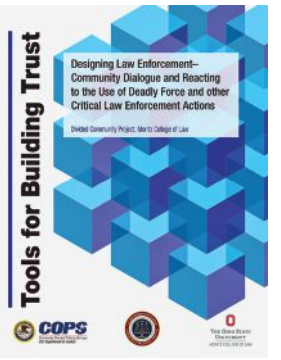
Copies of these new standards can be downloaded utilizing the following URLs:

TROS: **ntoa.org/pdf/TROS.pdf**

Public Order Standards: **ntoa.org/pdf/PublicOrder.pdf**

TOOLS FOR BUILDING TRUST: Designing Law Enforcement–Community Dialogue and Reacting to the Use of Deadly Force and Other Critical Law Enforcement Actions

Published by the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), this guide is designed to offer law enforcement agencies proactive ways to build trust and legitimacy through intentional law enforcement–community dialogue and identifies ideas and actions law enforcement might take reactively to draw on that accrued trust and rebuild relationships in the immediate aftermath of a critical law enforcement action. Leveraging social science research and case studies of existing law enforcement–community dialogue processes, this guide offers four considerations for the immediate aftermath of critical law enforcement actions, as well as ideas for collaboratively developing proactive, long-term dialogue and sustaining its outcomes.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Updates in the World of Traffic Safety and Enforcement

STEPHENIE SLAHOR, PH.D.

Recent advancements in traffic safety and enforcement focus on integrating a combination of new methods, practices, equipment, and strategies for improving road safety through data-driven insights and automated enforcement measures.

Traffic safety encompasses a wide range of methods, practices, equipment, and strategies aimed at ensuring smooth traffic flow; vigilant drivers; and safer conditions for drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, and school zones. A wide variety of ideas; technology; imagination; and, yes, jurisdictional restrictions are all part of traffic safety.

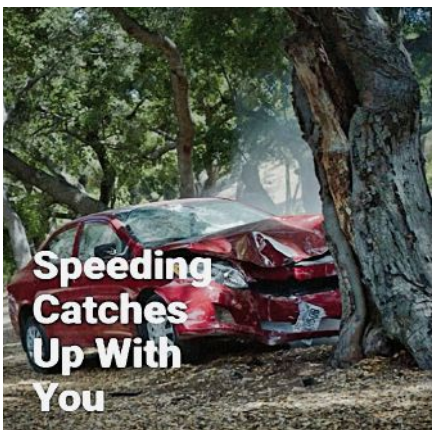
Distracted Driving

The evolution of cell phones from telephones to minicomputers has not only revolutionized technology, it has created situations in which the phone might become more important to a driver than safe driving. Thousands of drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, tow operators, and others have been killed because a driver was distracted by a cell phone's alert, message, texts, camera, or other feature. The National Safety Council and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) have promoted public education programs about the dangers of distracted driving. Their recommendations have led to such actions as upgrading or changing laws to combat the problem.

And, it must be noted that distracted driving is not just involving cell phones. It can also occur when drivers are eating; drinking; glancing at a GPS map; changing the radio setting; settling down children in the car; or talking or arguing with other passengers. In short, the distraction could be anything which takes away the driver's attention from driving safely.

The summertime 2024 travel season saw the NHTSA Deputy Administrator Sophie Shulman highlighting a speeding prevention campaign through the theme of "Speeding Catches Up With You." Beside the fact that speeding is dangerous and improper driving, it can also create stress in the driver, passengers and others on the road. The campaign was a $9.5 million media buy which featured radio, TV and digital platforms in English and Spanish.

Shulman also promoted a campaign against distracted driving. Crash fatality data indicated that, in accidents involving distracted drivers, about 20 percent of fatalities were to people outside the vehicle – pedestrians, cyclists and others on or alongside the road. She stated, "Sadly, distracted driving crashes



A campaign to prevent speeding, themed "Speeding Catches Up With You," was launched this past summer.

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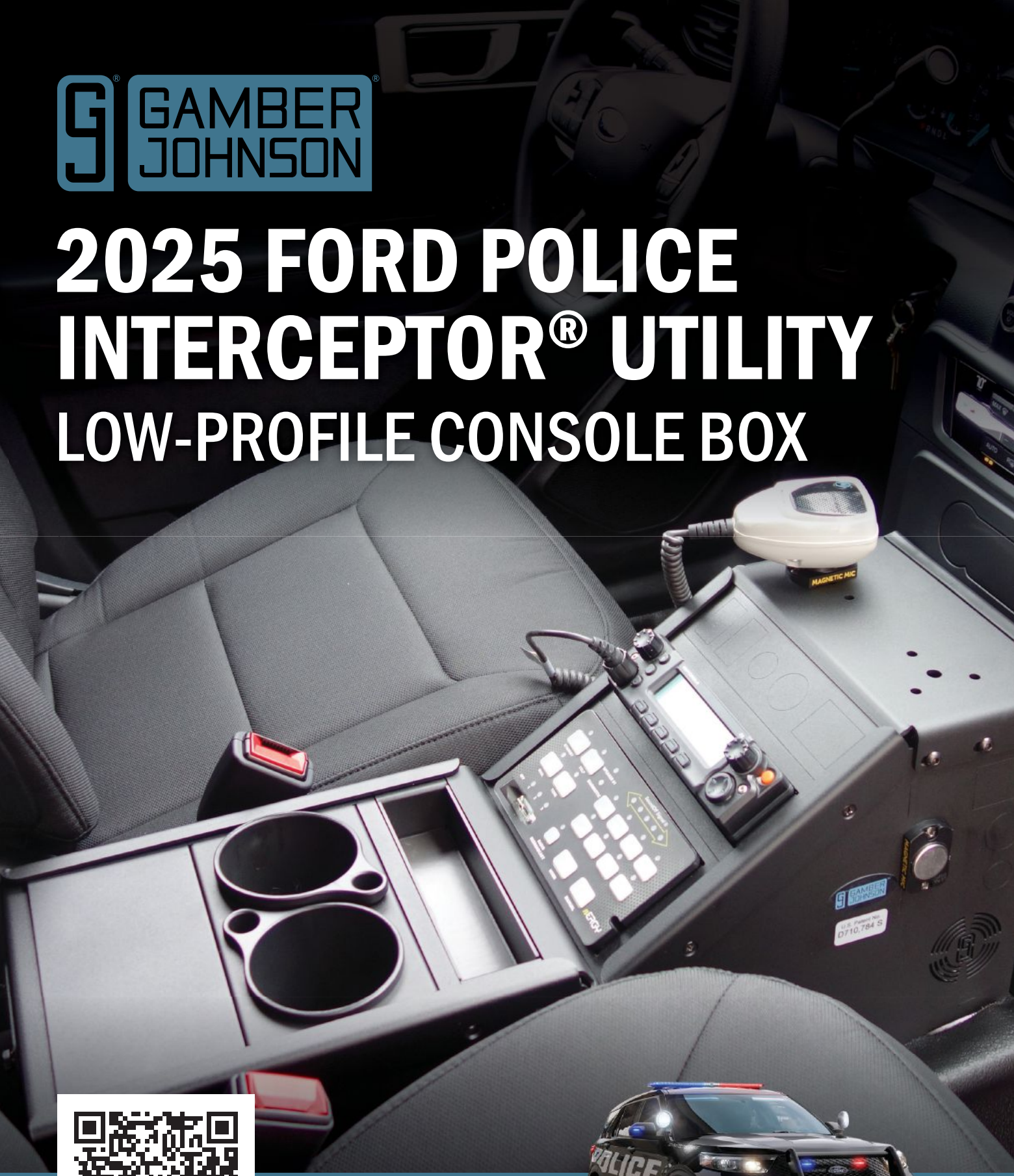

SCAN HERE TO LEARN MORE

Continued from page 56

and fatalities are likely underreported, as many drivers may not want to admit to being on their phone right before a crash. It's also difficult for law enforcement to detect distraction during crash investigations."

Texting, for example, whether sending or reading, takes the driver's eyes off the road for five seconds at least. If going 55 mph, the car will travel the length of a football field during that time.

NHTSA has a "Students Against Destructive Decisions" program which asks teens to avoid driving distracted by signing, and encouraging their friends to sign, a pledge. But, parents have to lead by example, too, in their own actions and in explaining the dangers of distracted driving.

Distractions might not always be the fault of the driver. For example, there are situations where emergency vehicle lights at the scene of a crime or accident are so bright that it is difficult for drivers to see if there are people outside their vehicles or on the roadway. Adjusting the intensity of emergency lighting is needed by the emergency services on scene so that the brightness and flashing auras do not distract drivers.

Passage Safety aims to advance traffic enforcement beyond just using speed cameras, by leveraging technology and innovative strategies which can genuinely influence driver behavior to improve safety.

Passage Safety

The brainchild of John Leibovitz, CEO, Passage Safety seeks to move traffic enforcement beyond mere speed cameras to the technology and creativity which can actually change driver behavior to enhance safety. He feels the system could both examine and enforce laws.

Certainly, drivers become aware of traffic cameras and usually slow down in their presence, but speed up afterward. Leibovitz' thought is that technology can cover a wider area, not just one location, wherever a safer zone is required such as a business district, a site of heavy pedestrian traffic, or a school zone. Rather than catch an errant driver once with a camera, the zone would give real-time cell phone notifications to the driver to alert them of the speeding they are doing. That repetitive feedback might alter a driver's behavior to slow down. And, because the system is data-driven with technology, it lessens, or eliminates, accusations of bias against an officer or even a neighborhood where cameras are more prevalent than elsewhere in the city.

With widespread camera coverage and because compliance is the main challenge, drivers could be cited, of course, but a built-in modality in the system could also give just a warning, or a second warning, before a fine is issued, or give an escalation of an existing fine for repeated violations. A bonus to such a system can be data collected about traffic patterns, flows, speeds, accidents, and the need for traffic signals or other modifications. Such data is not only useful for law enforcement, but also other agencies involved in design and improvement decisions.

Although most of Leibovitz' work on the idea of Passage Safety has taken place in Washington, DC, he is seeking agencies and universities to host pilot projects in other locations where technology can be developed and used for particular constraints or problems. Leibovitz can be contacted at info@passage.city. In addition, a white paper from Passage Safety detailing Automated Traffic Enforcement can be downloaded at **https://tinyurl.com/4c32j8eh**

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Drones

Common in search and rescue and other operational uses in law enforcement, there may be ways in which drones can assist in traffic safety.

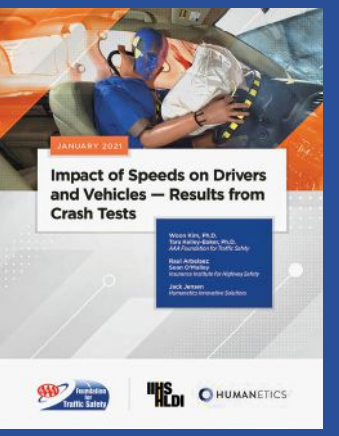
Drones can be kitted out with cameras and other features which can measure the speed of a vehicle, read the license plate, or take a photo of it. Drones are mobile enough to follow along nearly any kind of terrain or setting and yet be far cheaper to operate than a plane or helicopter which might cover the same area. (A quick note: At Grand Canyon National Park, drones are primarily used for search and rescue and for spotting wildfires. Drones are successful in those tasks, except for one fact: The park's falcons love to attack the drones!)

Learning to use a drone is usually a quick set of lessons for the operators who can then deploy drones to cover various areas of roads and highways where the drone's capabilities can be used. Drones might be more useful in watching for such offenses as certain types of speeding, improper lane changes, or failure to wear a seat belt.

The Pilot Institute of Prescott, AZ, has considered the possibilities drones might give to public safety. Will drivers change their ways if they see a drone? Maybe, but the sight of a police cruiser, helicopter or speed camera might be more effective until drivers become more familiar with drones as another law enforcement tool. Perhaps privacy concerns are not a problem because the expectation of privacy when driving is fairly low. But, drones can be a distraction when drivers see them and take their eyes from the road. And, there may be the thought that the drone will lose battery power or crash suddenly and that could happen over a busy roadway and perhaps cause an accident.

The Pilot Institute says the use of drones must involve driver education. Although there have been tests in the US and elsewhere for the use of drones in traffic enforcement, the concept is still not formal policy in terms of technology or regulations. Such policy could allay public fears especially when coupled with public trials which would demonstrate how drones would operate, how

Crash Tests Reveal that Even Small Increases in Speed Can Result in Fatal Outcomes



Minor increases in speed can greatly impact crash outcomes, as demonstrated by crash tests conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) and Humanetics. These organizations tested crashes at speeds of 40, 50 and 56 mph, revealing that even a small rise in speed significantly raises the risk of severe injury or death for drivers.

"We conducted these crash tests to assess the effect of speeds on drivers and learned that a small increase could make a big difference in the harm to a human body," said Dr. David Yang, Executive Director of the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. "A speeding driver may arrive at their destination a few minutes faster, but is the trade-off of getting severely injured or even losing one's life worth it if a crash occurs?"

The AAA Foundation partnered with IIHS and Humanetics, the top manufacturer of biofidelic crash test dummies, to investigate how speed influences the probability and severity of occupant injuries in a crash. They used three 2010 Honda CR-V EX crossovers, selected because they matched the average age (11.8 years) of typical US vehicles and had earned the highest rating in the IIHS moderate overlap front test. The researchers observed that, as the crash speed increased, there was more structural damage and greater forces exerted on the dummy's entire body.

"Higher speed limits cancel out the benefits of vehicle safety improvements like airbags and improved structural designs," said Dr. David Harkey, IIHS president. "The faster a driver is going before a crash, the less likely it is that they'll be able to get down to a survivable speed even if they have a chance to brake before impact."

At a 40 mph impact speed, there was minimal intrusion into the driver's space. However, at 50 mph, there was noticeable deformation of the driver's side door opening, dashboard and foot area. At 56 mph, the interior of the vehicle was significantly compromised, with the dummy's sensors detecting severe neck injuries and a high risk of fractures to the long bones in the lower leg.

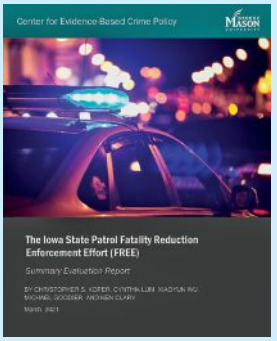
At both 50 and 56 mph, the upward movement of the steering wheel caused the dummy's head to pass through the deployed airbag, resulting in the face hitting the steering wheel. Measurements from the dummy indicated a high risk of facial fractures and severe brain injury.

When properly implemented and enforced, speed limits enhance traffic flow and ensure the safety of all road users.

A copy of the report, "Impact of Speeds on Drivers and Vehicles – Results from Crash Tests," can be downloaded at **https://tinyurl.com/2xxtejmh**

Continued from page 59

A Review of Patrol Techniques to Reduce Serious Injury and Fatality Crashes


Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy
The Iowa State Patrol Fatality Reduction Enforcement Effort (FREE)
Summary Evaluation Report

Written by the National Policing Institute (NPI), this article presents the findings of George Mason University's (GMU's) evaluation of the implementation of the Fatality Reduction Enforcement Program (FREE) at the Iowa State Patrol (ISP) in 2018 and 2019. GMU's evaluation suggests that FREE reduced crashes involving impaired driving in the program area by 18% in year one and may have contributed to more significant reductions in speed-related crashes. Law enforcement leaders may consider this approach to complement other strategies used to reduce unsafe driving behaviors and maximize traffic safety enforcement efforts.

The article can be read at **https://tinyurl.com/mrxx2drs**

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they can avoid obstacles, and how they can often mitigate potential damage should the drone crash.

Traffic Calming

While traffic calming might bring to mind the across the road bump which citizens sometimes nickname "the sleeping policeman," those humps (hopefully) get drivers to slow their vehicles to avoid an abrupt jarring along a road or in a parking lot. But, traffic calming is more than that and sometimes involves more creative ideas such as painting new lines/colors/patterns; using permanent or removable barriers (planters and bollards); changing parking configurations; and fine-tuning temporary and permanent measures to improve traffic and pedestrian access and enjoyment along streets.

For example, parking diagonally, not parallel, to the flow of traffic is easier for drivers who dislike all that is involved in parallel parking: getting a line of sight, judging distance to the curb, holding up traffic behind while making those calculations, and jockeying the car back and forth once in or near the curbside to park. Configuring parking slots on the diagonal is simpler on some byways and changes the availability of parking slots – usually adding up to 40 percent more spaces than parallel parking actually offers. But, diagonal parking does carry a few hazards of its own as drivers must be alert to oncoming traffic when backing out of a slot, and as oncoming drivers must keep aware of drivers attempting to rejoin the traffic flow.

Another traffic calmer is the use of rumble strips with roughened granite and concrete to create raised lines, patterns or strips across the road which vibrate when driven upon so that the abrasive sound alerts to a change in conditions requiring special care such as a pedestrian crossing or school zone. Rumble strips are sometimes accompanied by colorful bricks or paint that delineate a part of the road needing special awareness.

Similar traffic calming ideas can be found at **pps.org/article/livememtraffic.** Solutions vary depending on such things as whether the road is used by emergency vehicles or school buses; where through traffic gets bogged down; the nature of the neighborhood; and even water drainage.

Not Just Here

And, lest you think traffic safety applies only to America's highways and roads, in a unique partnership between the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Road Safety, collaboration is being strengthened to enhance road safety around the world. This is in light of a study by the World Health Organization which found that road traffic accidents kill 1.4 million people worldwide, annually, with 90 percent of those injuries taking place in low and middle income countries.

The goal is to enhance road policing enforcement and safety by leveraging the global network of police leaders and the UN through programs, legislative changes, resources, and partnerships. The IACP is a natural fit to the effort with more than 33,000 members in over 170 countries. P&SN

Stephenie Slahor, Ph.D., J.D., is a writer in the fields of law enforcement and security. She can be reached at drss12@msn.com.

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E-mail:
info@policeandsecuritynews.com

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REAL STORIES OF GENUINE ABSURDITY

JAMES L. MCCLINTON, PH.D.

Being in touch with the community... The Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (MNPD) recently fired a police officer who allegedly appeared in an OnlyFans video in uniform. The video shows the officer engaging in sexual activity with a woman during a fake traffic stop. The officer's face is deliberately hidden in the video which was shot from the perspective of a man in the front passenger seat. The Nashville officer identified himself as "Officer Johnson of PD" in the video. He tells the woman that she had been speeding and asks for her license and registration. The rest of the video shows the officer and woman touching each other in a sexual manner. The officer, whose police patch was slightly visible in a screengrab from the video, was terminated. (*"Members of the Academy, the award for Blatant Stupidity goes to Officer Johnson!"*)

No Happy Meal®s served that day!... In Lakeland, Florida, customers in a McDonald's® drive-thru were unhappy with an incorrect order. They argued with the 22-year-old female employee working at the window before starting to drive away – that's when the employee allegedly threw a drink at the car. Two of the customers exited the car, opened the drive-thru window and threw drinks at back at her. The employee then grabbed a handgun from a white bag, walked outside and fired two shots at the vehicle as it left the parking lot. Police found one bullet hole in the car, but there were no reported injuries. She was arrested for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. (*I'll have the special... however, not the .38 Special.*)

This gives new meaning to "give me a high and tight"... Police officers in Genoa, Italy, were stumped by a drug trafficking case in their city – that is, until they noticed a large number of bald and beardless men visiting a local barbershop. Investigators initiated surveillance and then searched the shop, where they found 100 grams of cocaine, precision scales and packaging materials. They also found hashish at the barber's home and evidence of ongoing communication with inmates in a local prison. The 55-year-old barber is awaiting sentencing. (*It sounds like he was cutting more than just hair.*)

This thief didn't exactly nail it...

An intellectually challenged thief targeted a nail salon in Atlanta, Georgia, because he apparently thought it would be a prime location for a fast and easy holdup. Surveillance camera footage shows him entering the salon, his hand in a bag and shouting, "Everybody get down! Give me all your money." Nail salon patrons and employees were not impressed and no one hit the floor. In fact, they simply stared at him and most barely moved or even changed expressions on their faces. Finally, one customer got a little fed up and, instead of handing over her money, she simply walked out of the business. Seeing that this just isn't going as planned, the robber threw in the towel, so to speak, and quietly left the salon. (*Not what you would call a "polished" performance.*)

It was a real brew ha ha... A 23-year-old bikini clad barista grabbed a hammer and smashed in a man's car windshield amid a fight over the cost of a $22 coffee. She was captured on surveillance video pulling out a hammer during the dispute which took place at her drive-thru coffee shop in South Seattle. She told a local news outlet that she only did damage to the customer's car after he exited the vehicle, approached the drive-thru window and threw the iced coffee at her. The customer, a repeat patron at the business, had previously complained about the high price of his order. "No one is forcing you to come here," she allegedly told him. The peeved patron poured the $22 cup of coffee on her, before she brought out the hammer. She called the police and has filed misdemeanor assault charges against the customer. (*Sounds like both of them need to back off the caffeine.*)

Average weight of fire hydrant: 250 pounds – wouldn't it be easier to just get a job?... A water company located in Los Angeles has resorted to installing locked shields over fire hydrants in some neighborhoods as a way to stop a surge in thefts of the hydrants. The company said the thefts happen daily. Because the hydrants are made of iron and brass, company officials think they're being sold as scrap metal on the black market. Replacements cost $3,500 each and the company has lost $1.2 million so far. "It's mind-boggling that someone would just come into a neighborhood and steal a fire hydrant," said one of the residents. "You're now putting a whole neighborhood in danger." (*Dogs throughout Los Angeles County have been distressed by this crime wave.*)

Maybe he was "standing his ground"... Sheriff's deputies say a Florida man is behind bars after he allegedly shot a Walmart delivery drone, rendering it inoperable. Deputies were dispatched to Walmart in Clermont after drone delivery representatives reported the incident. A two-man crew was practicing mock deliveries to attract business and interest. While awaiting a drone delivery's descent, the crew heard a loud sound consistent with that of a firearm. One representative told deputies he saw a man at the side of a home holding a gun pointed towards the sky. The crew returned to Walmart and, after inspecting the drone, the company reps discovered $2,500 worth of damage to its payload system. Deputies went to the home where the alleged shooting happened and they met with a 72-year-old resident. When asked about the incident with a drone, he allegedly said that he saw the drone fly over his home, prompting him to retrieve his gun to fire at it. He was arrested and charged with shooting at an aircraft, criminal mischief with damage over $1,000, and discharging a firearm on public or residential property. (*This takes "get off my lawn" to a whole new level!*) P&SN

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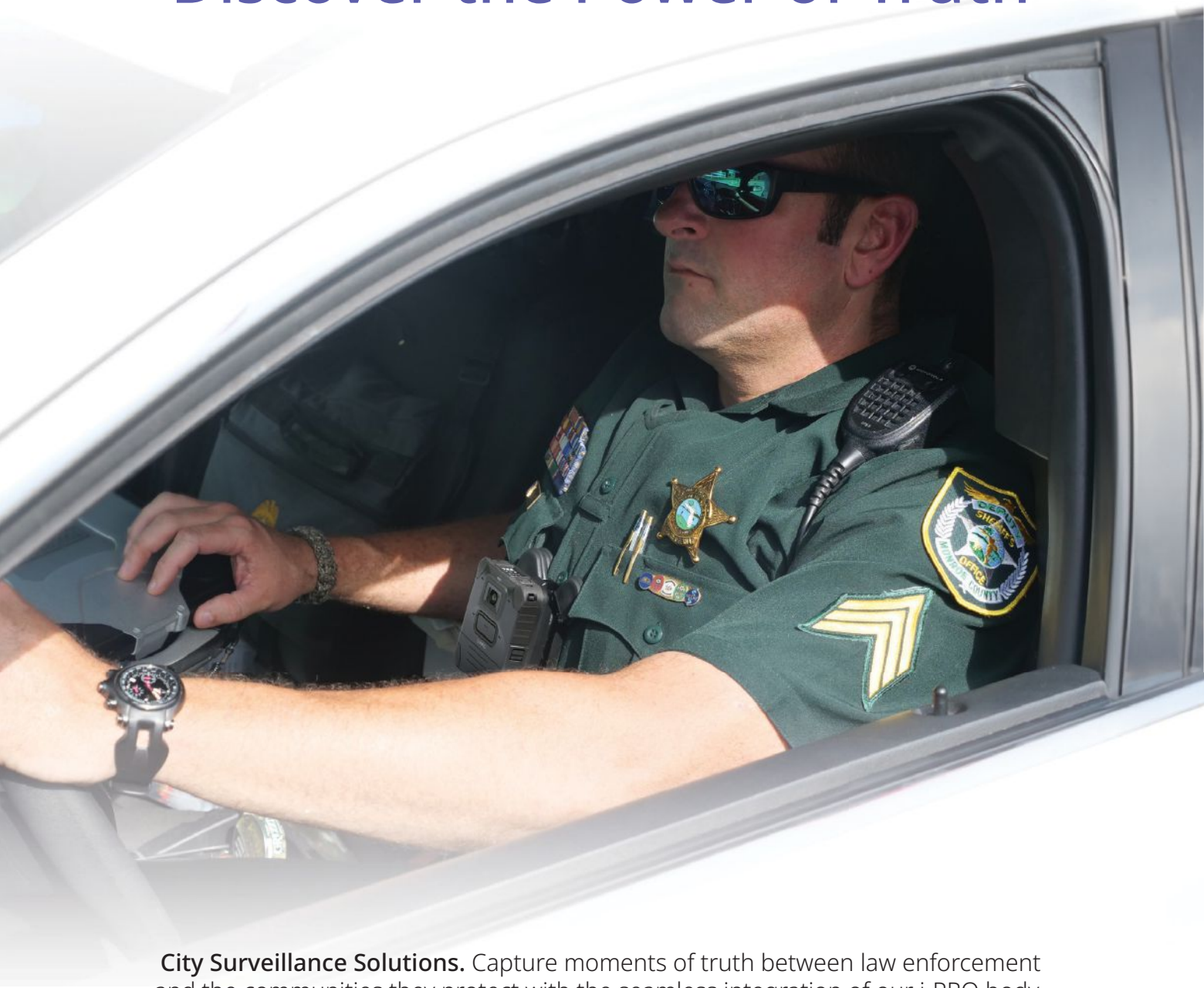

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